



MONS.^r VOITURE.



MONS.^r VOITURE.

THE
WORKS
OF

Monfieur VOITURE,

▲ Member of the Royal Academy at Paris, Compleat :
Containing His Familiar

LETTERS
TO

Gentlemen and Ladies.

Made English by

John Dryden, Esq ;
Thomas Cheek, Esq ;
Henry Cromwell, Esq ;
Mr. Dennis.

} Thomas Seymour, Esq ;
John Savil, Esq ;
Captain Barker,
Mr Raphson,
Mr. Thomas Brown,

With Three Collections of

LETTERS
On FRIENDSHIP, and feveral
other Occasions :

Written by,

John Dryden, Esq ;
William Wycherly, Esq ;
William Congreve, Esq ;

} Mr. Dennis,
Dr. ———
Mr. Tho. Brown,
Mr. Edward Ward,

And Facetious LETTERS out
of Greek, Latin, and French.

By the Late Ingenious Mr: Tho. Brown.

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THE WORKS

OF
MONTGOMERY

A Member of the Royal Academy at Paris, &c.
Containing His Poetical

LETTERS

TO

Gentlemen and Ladies.



To the Honourable
Sir Cha. Duncomb, Kt.

S H E R I F F of
London and Middlesex.

THO' I am wholly a Stranger to
your Person, I am not to your
Character; for who can live in
London and not see living Instances
of your Charity and Munificence? You
have been the Sanctuary of the Distressed,
and even those unhappy Wretches, who
found no Benefit in the Public Deliverance
of the Kingdom, have ow'd theirs to you.
At your own proper Expence, and by a
Generosity peculiar to your self, you have
done that which has been reckon'd Piety
in the greatest Monarchs and Republicks,
and what Princes have sent Royal Fleets
into the *Streights* to perform. You have
rescued Numbers of Christian Captives out

The Epistle Dedicatory.

of the cruel Hands of Tyrants, professing the same Religion, and breathing the same Air with themselves. You have redeem'd Slaves in a Country which abominates Servitude, but by a strange Fascination suffers its Natives to enslave one another: You have deliver'd them out of an unwholesome nasty Confinement, where they dragg'd a Life wretched to themselves, unserviceable to the Commonwealth, lamentable to their Relations, only to gratifie the Revenge or stupid Malice of their haughty Oppressors.

In the best constituted and most generous Government that ever appear'd in the World, to save the Life of a Citizen, was thought an Action that deserv'd nothing less than a Public Reward. You have restored the Lives of a hundred Citizens, by restoring them to their Health, their Liberty and Tranquility of Mind; for what is Life without those Blessings to make it supportable?

Charity, by what Stupidity it so happens I cannot imagine, has not that Incense paid it, nor makes that Figure in the World that Heroism does. To lay a whole Country in Ashes, to destroy Millions of poor Wretches, has for several Ages pass'd for a Royal Vertue, Mankind has been so foolish,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

tish, as to Deifie those that have perform'd these noble Exploits, and advanced themselves by the Slavery or Destruction of their Fellow-creatures.

But tho' the present Age pays a servile Adoration to Heroes, yet Posterity judges of them otherwise; and accordingly, we find, that *Cesar* and *Alexander*, who were treated as Gods when alive, are now, when all Occasions of Flattery to their Persons cease, treated as Robbers and Usurpers.

It is otherwise with Charity: Whatever Acknowledgements the Time it lives in pays it, Posterity is sure to reward and honour it; Age only serves to extend it the more, like a well-grown Tree that enlarges its Branches every Spring. 'Tis true, it does not delight in Noise and Ostentation; it flies from that Applause which Heroism courts; it values it self upon no mute Inscriptions and breathless Statues. It erects to it self living Images, and will be commemorated with Gratitude, while there is such a Thing as Memory or Gratitude in the World. The Heroe may extort Flattery even from the Slaves he crushes, or purchase mercenary Praise: but a charitable Man is sure to have the voluntary Prayers and Blessings of those whom he relieves, and even Calumny it self dares

The Epistle Dedicatory.

not attack him. Thus we see you have the general Acclamations and Applauses of the People, for having done those Actions which the greatest *Athenians* or *Spartans* wou'd have been proud of, in a City which in no respect is inferior to *Sparta* or *Athens*.

Pardon therefore an unhappy Man, who has laboured under Afflictions, which he might have prevented, if he wou'd have gone upon dishonest Methods, by which others have not only repaired, but improved their Fortunes, and whose little All, if it had not fallen into dilatory, I will not say malicious Hands might have afforded him a Retreat, if not a comfortable Support: Pardon him, I say, if having experienced hard Usage in the World, he cou'd not forbear to pay his Public Acknowledgment to the Patriot that has redeem'd so many Sufferers, if he endeavours to celebrate that Vertue which wou'd have kept him from sinking, and extols that Charity that may restore him when he is sunk.

For this Reason I have presumed to dedicate the following Volume of Letters to your self, which were given me by some of my Friends, who, in commiseration of my hard Circumstances, were willing to contribute something towards my Assistance.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ance. It does not become me, who pretend to be no Judge, to say any thing of the Performance. The Gentlemen who are concern'd in the Collection are too well known to want my Praises. I hope that they may serve to entertain you at your vacant Hours, when you can unbend your self from the Hurry of Public Business. At least, I beg you to accept them as a Testimony of my Respect, which shall be ever paid you by

Your most obedient

and most humble Servant,

S A M. B R I S C O E.

The Epistle Dedicatoria

and. It does not become me, who pre-
tend to be no Judge, to say any thing of
the Importance of the Gentlemen who are
concern'd in the Collection are too well
known to want my Praises. I hope that
they may give to entertain you at your
next House, when you can spend your
time in the study of Publick Affairs. At
least, I beg you to accept them as a Testi-
mony of my Respect, which shall be ever
and yours

Your most obedient

and most humble Servant

2. n. B. 1702.

A. 4. T. H. B.

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Made English by several eminent Hands.

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Familiar

Familiar and Courtly
LETTERS,

WRITTEN

By Mons. *VOITURE*,

TO

Persons of the greatest Wit, Honour and Quality of both Sex, in the Court of *France*.

Made English by several Eminent Hands.

To my Lord Cardinal de la Valette.

A Description of a Country Journey.

By Mr. Dryden.

My Lord,

I Am satisfy'd, that you old Cardinals take more Authority upon you, than those of the last Promotion; because, having written many Letters to you, without receiving one from you, yet you complain of my Neglect. In the mean
B time,

2 Voiture's Familiar Letters.

time, seeing so many well-bred Men, who assure me that you do me too much Honour to think of me at all; and that I am bound to write to you, and to give my Acknowledgements, I am resolved to take their Counsel, and to pass over all sorts of Difficulties and Considerations of my own Interest. This then will give you to understand, that six Days after the Eclipse, and a Fortnight after my Decease, Madam the Princess, Mademoiselle de Bourbon, Madam du Vigan, Madam Aubry, Mademoiselle de Rambouillet, Mademoiselle Paulet, Monsieur de Chaudebonne, and my self, left Paris about six in the Evening, and went to *La Barre*, where Madam du Vigan was to give a Collation to the Princess. In our way thither we found nothing worth our Observation; but only that at *Ormesson*, an English Matiff came up to the Boot of the Coach, to make his Compliment to me. Be pleased to take this along with you, my Lord, that as often as I express my self in the Plural Number, as for Example, We went, we found, or we beheld, 'tis always to be understood, that I spake in the Quality of a Cardinal. From thence we happily arriv'd at *La Barre*, and enter'd a Hall, where we trod upon nothing but Roses and Orange-flowers. Madam the Princess, after

ter

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 3

ter she had sufficiently admir'd this Magnificence, had a Mind to see the Walks before Supper: the Sun was then just sitting in a Cloud of Gold and Assurance, and gave us no larger a share of his Beams, than to supply a soft and pleasing Light: The Air was not disturb'd either with Wind or Heat; and it seem'd that Heav'n and Earth were conspiring with Madam *du Vigan*, in her Treating the fairest Princess upon Earth. After she had passed through a great Parterre and Gardens full of Orange-trees, she arrived at the Entrance of an enchanted Wood, so thick and shady, that Authors conclude the Sun, since the Day of his Birth, never enter'd it, till now that he waited on her Highness thither. At the end of an Alley, which carried the sight out of distance, we found a Fountain, which alone cast up a greater Quantity of Water, than all those of *Tivoli* together; about it were plac'd four and twenty Violins, which had much ado to make themselves heard, for the rumbling of the Streams in falling: When we were got near enough we discover'd, in a certain Nich, within a Pallisade, a *Diana*, of about eleven or twelve Years of Age, and fairer than the Forests of *Greece* and *Thessaly* had ever seen: she bore her Bow and Arrows

4. Voiture's Familiar Letters.

in her Eyes, and was encompass'd with all the Glories of her Brother. In another Nich, not far distant, was another Nymph, fair and gentle enough to pass for one of her Train: those who are not given to believe Fables, took them for Mademoiselles *de Bourbon* and *la Priande*; and, to confess the Truth, they resembled them exactly. All the Company was in a profound Silence, admiring so many different Objects, which at once astonish'd their Eyes and Ears, when on a sudden the Goddess leapt down from her Nich, and with a Grace, impossible to be describ'd, began a Ball, which lasted for some time about the Fountain. 'Twas somewhat strange, my Lord, that in the midst of so many Pleasures, which were sufficient to engage the whole Attention of their Spirits, who enjoy'd them yet we could not forbear to think of you and it was generally concluded, that something was wanting to our Happiness, since neither you, nor Madam *de Rambouille* were present. Then I took up a Harp and sung this Spanish Stanza,

*Pues quiso mi suerte dura,
Que faltando mi sennor
Tambien faltasse mi Dama.*

And continued the rest of the Song so very melodiously, and with such an Air of Sa

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 5

ness, that there was not one of the Company, but the Tears came into their Eyes, and they wept abundantly: Their Sorrow had endur'd much longer, had not the Violins struck up a Sarabrand, with great speed and presence of Mind; upon which the Company got upon their Feet, with as much Gayety, as if nothing in the World had happen'd, and fell into the Dance, thus leaping, capring, turning round, and hopping, we returned to the House, where we found a Table already spread, and serv'd as if it had been serv'd by Fairies. This, my Lord, is one Passage of the Adventure, which is so stupendous that no Words are capable of expressing it: For there are neither Colours of Speech, nor Figures in the Art of Rhetoric, which can describe six several sorts of Potages, which were at once presented to the Sight. And what was particularly remarkable, that there being none but Goddesses, and two Demi-Gods at the Table, (*viz.*) Monsieur *Chaudebonne* and I, yet every one eat as heartily, and with as good Appetites, as if we had been neither more nor less, than plain Mortals: And, to confess the truth, a better Treat could not have been provided. Amongst other things, there were twelve Dishes, besides other Eatables in

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disguise, which were never seen before on any Human Table; and whose very Names have never been so much as mention'd in any History. This Circumstance, my Lord, by some disastrous Accident, has been related to Madam *la Marechalle*. —, and though, immediately upon it, she took twelve Drams of *Opium*, beyond her ordinary Dose, yet she has never been able to close her Eyes, from that fatal Moment. During the first Course, there was not so much as one single Cup went round to your Health; the Company was so intent upon the present Affair; and at the Desert, we quite forgot it. I beg your Permission, my Lord, to relate all things as they pass'd, like a Faithful Historian as I am, and without Flattery; for I would not for the World, that Posterity should mistake one thing for another; and that at the end of two thousand Years hence, or thereabouts, Posterity should imagine your Health was drunk, when really there was no such thing in Nature. Yet I must give this Testimony to Truth, that it was not for want of Memory; For, during all Supper-time, you were often mention'd; all the Ladies wish'd you there, and some of them very heartily, or I am much mistaken. As we rose from Table, the sound of the Violins

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 7

lins summon'd us up Stairs, where we found a Chamber so gloriously lighted up, that it look'd as if the Day, which was now below the Earth, had retired hither, and was assembled in one Body of Light. Here the Ball began again, in better Order and with more Grace, than it had been danc'd about the Fountain: And the most Magnificent Part of it, my Lord, was, that I footed it there in Person. Mademoiselle de Bourbon, I must confess, was of opinion, that I danc'd aukwardly; but she concluded, to my advantage, that I must be allowed to Fence well; because, that at the end of every Cadence, I put my self upon my Guard: The Ball continued with much Pleasure till all of a sudden a great Noise, which was heard without Doors, caused the Company to look out at the Windows; where, from a great Wood, which was about three hundred Paces from the House, we beheld so vast a Number of Fire-works issuing out, that we verily believ'd all the Branches and Trunks of the Trees had been metamorphos'd into Guns; that all the Stars were falling from the Firmament, and that the Element of Fire was descending into the middle Region of the Air. Here, my Lord, are three Hyperboles tack'd together, which being valued at a moderate Price, are worth

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three Dozen of Fuses at the least. After we were recover'd out of this great Fit of Extasie, into which so many Miracles had plung'd us, we resolv'd on our Departure, and took the Way to *Paris* by the Light of twenty Flambeaux: We pass'd through all the *Ormessonnois*, and the wide Plains of *Espinay*, without Resistance, and went through the middle of *St. Dennis*. Being plac'd in the Coach by the side of Madam ——— I said a whole *Miserere* to her, on your behalf; to which she replied, with much Gallantry, and no less Civility. We sung in our Journey a World of Songs, Roundeaux, Roundelays, Lampoons, and Ballads; and were now half a League beyond *St. Dennis*, it being two a Clock in the Morning precisely; the Fatigue of the Journey, Watching, Walking, and the painful Exercise of the Ball, having made me somewhat heavy, when there happen'd an Accident, which I verily believ'd wou'd have been my total Ruine: There is a certain little Village, situate, say the Geographers, betwixt *Paris* and *St. Dennis*, and vulgarly call'd, *La Valette*: At our going out of this Place, we overtook three Coaches, in which were those Numerical Violins which had been playing to us. Hereupon, Satan entring into the Spirit of Mademoiselle,

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 9

selle, she commanded them to follow us, and to give Serenades all Night long to the poor innocent People of *Paris*, who were asleep and dreamt not of her Malice: This Diabolical Proposition made my Hair rise an end upon my Head; yet all the Company pass'd a Vote in Favour of it; and the Word was just ready to be given, but by a signal Providence, they had left their Violins behind them at *la Barre*; for which the Lord reward them. From hence, my Lord, you may reasonably conclude, that Mademoiselle is a dangerous Person in the Night, if ever there was any in the World: and that I had great reason at Madam ——'s House to say, that the Violins ought to be turn'd out of Doors, when that pestilent Lady was in Company. Well, we continued our Way happily enough, but only that as we enter'd the *Fauxbourg*, we met six lusty Fellows, as naked as ever they were born, who passed directly by the Coach, to the terror of the Ladies. In fine, We arrived at *Paris*; and what I am now going to relate, is indeed prodigious: Cou'd you imagine it, my Lord? the Obscurity was so great, that it cover'd all that vast City; and, instead of what we left it, not full seven Hours before, fill'd with Noise, and with a Crowd of Men, Women, Hor-

ses,

10 Voiture's Familiar Letters.

ses, and Coaches; we now found nothing but a deep Silence, a dismal Desert, a frightful Solitude, dispeopled Streets, not meeting with any Mortal Man, but only certain Animals, who fled from the Lustre of our Torches. But the remaining part of the Adventure, you shall have, my Lord, another time. As Boyando, tells you,

*Qui è il fin del Canto; e torno ad Orlando,
Addio Signor, a voi me raccomando.*

To Mademoiselle Paulet.

By Mr. Dennis.

Madam,

✓ **S**O great a Misfortune as mine, wanted no less Consolation than that which I lately received from you; and I look'd on your Letter, as a Pardon which Heav'n granted me after my Sentence: I can call by no other name, the News which oblig'd me to return to this Place, and I can assure you that the Sentence of Death is oftentimes less rigorous. But since, in the midst of all my Misfortunes, I have the Honour

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 11

to be remember'd by you, to complain would be ill-becoming of me: for methinks he may dispence with the Favours of Fortune, who is happy enough to obtain yours. This is the Reason that I shall make use of to comfort my self, for the Necessity of remaining here, and not that which you urg'd in yours, That it is better to be an Exile in a Foreign Land, than to be a Prisoner in one's own Country: For, alas! you know but one half of my Misery, if you are not convinc'd that I am both together; and if you judge of the Matter rightly, you will find that a thing, which seems very inconsistent, is to be found in me, which is to be banish'd from the same Person by whom I am kept a Prisoner. You will find it difficult to interpret this Riddle, unless you call to mind, that I have always been us'd to mingle a Dram of Love in my Letters: For if, as you say, I am allow'd some Liberty here, of which I should be depriv'd in *France*; I beseech you let it be that of assuring you, that there is a great deal of Passion mix'd with the Affection which I expresse for your Service. I should indeed be Ungrateful, if I should discover but an ordinary Friendship for a Person who does such extraordinary Things for me; and I am obliged to fall in love at least with your
Gene-

12 *Voiture's Familiar Letters.*

Generosity. I have been acquainted what Care a Gentleman and a Lady has taken to enquire of my Welfare, which is an additional Obligation to one whom they had extremely oblig'd before. For all the rest, they have seem'd buried in so profound a Silence, that for six Months together I have heard not the least mention of them. Whether this comes from their Forgetfulness or from their Prudence, I am unable to determine: Yet Forgetfulness may be allow'd an Excuse for Silence, but a dumb Remembrance is without Defence. I leave you to conclude, Madam, how much Lustre this reflects upon what you have done for me, and how much I am oblig'd to you for a long Letter at a time, when others have been afraid to send me their Service. Therefore let me assure you, that tho' I am unable to make suitable Returns to such Goodness, I esteem it at least, and extol it as it deserves, and that I am as much as a Man can possibly be,

Madam, Yours, &c.

To

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 13

To Monsieur de Chaudebonne.

I Writ to you ten or twelve Days ago, and return'd you Thanks for the two Letters, which I have at length received from you. If you were but sensible of the Satisfaction they brought with them, you would be sorry for not having writ to me oftner, and for not frequently repeating the Consolation, of which I had so much need. *Madrid*, which is the agreeablest Place in the World, for those who at once are Lusty and Libertines, is the most disconsolate, for those who are Regular, or those who are Indisposed. And in Lent, which is the Players Vacation, I do not know so much as one Pleasure that a Man can enjoy with Conscience. My Melancholy here, and my want of Company, have produc'd a good Effect in me; for they have reconcil'd me to Books, which I had for a time forsaken; and being able to meet with no other Pleasures, I have been forc'd to taste and to relish that of Reading: Prepare then to see me a Philosopher as great as your self; and consider how fast a Man must come on, who for seven whole Months has studied, or has been sick: For if one of the chief Things that Philosophy aims at, is a Con-
tempt

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tempt of Life; the Stone-cholic is certainly the best of Masters, and *Plato* and *Socrates* persuades us less efficaciously. It has lately read me a Lecture, that lasted seventeen Days, and which I shall not quickly forget; and which has often made me consider how very feeble we are, since three grains of sand, are sufficient to cast us down. But if it determines me to any Sect, it shall not at least be that which maintains that Pain is not an Evil; and that he who is Wise, is at all times Happy. But whatever befalls me, I can neither be Happy nor Wise, without being near to you, and nothing can make me one or the other, so much as your Presence or your Example. Yet am I very uncertain when I shall be able to leave this Place, and expecting both Money and Men, which are coming by Sea, and which are two things that do not always keep touch with us; I apprehend my remaining here longer than I could wish; therefore I make it my humble Request to you, That you would not forget me so long as you have done, and that you would testify, by doing me the Honour of Writing to me, that you are convinc'd of the real Affection with which

I am yours, &c.

To

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To Monsieur de Godeau.

Sir,

YOU ought to give me time to recover our Tongue, before you oblige me to write to you: For it appears to me to be something absurd, that I, who have been now so long a Foreigner, and but just come from breathing the Air of *Barbary*, should presume to expose my Letters, to one of the most eloquent Men in *France*. This Consideration has kept me silent till now. But tho' I forbear to answer your Challenges, I cannot refuse to return your Civilities: By these you have found a way to vanquish me, in spite of all my Evasions: In my present Condition it is more reputable to you, to Conquer me this way, than to overcome me by Force; You would have acquir'd but small Glory by vigorously attacking a Man, who is already driven to Extreamity, and to whom Fortune has given so many Blows, that the least may satisfy to over-whelm him. Amidst the Darkness in which she hath plac'd us, we can have no Defence; but here all our Art and our Skill in Parring are useless. The Case perhaps might be otherwise, if you had set before my Eyes the Sun of which
you

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you make mention ; and, as dejected as you see me now, I should grow daring enough to enter the Lifts against you, if the Light of that were divided between us equally. 'Tis more to have that alone on your side, than all the rest of Heav'n. The Beauties which sparkle in all that you do, are only deriv'd from hers, and it is the Influence of her Rays on you, which produces so many Flowers. Nothing can ever appear more lively, than those which you scatter on every thing that comes from you. I have seen them upon the Ocean's extreamest Shores, and in Places where Nature cannot produce, no, not one Blade of Grass. I have receiv'd Nosegays of them, which made me meet in Desarts, with the choicest Delicacies of *Greece* and of fruitful *Italy*. And tho' they had been carried four hundred Leagues, neither the length of Way, nor of Time had in the least diminished their Lustre. They are indeed Immortal and cannot decay, and so vastly different from all Terrestrial Productions, that it is with a great deal of Justice, that you have offer'd them up to Heaven; for Altars alone are worthy of them. Believe me, Sir, in what I am saying, I speak but my real Sentiments; when my Curiosity, as you say, had oblig'd me to pass the Bounds of the

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ancient World, to find out rare and surprising Objects, your Works were the wonder-fullest things that I saw, and *Africa* could show me nothing more new, and no more extraordinary Sight. Reading them under the Shade of its Palms, I wish'd you crown'd with them all; and at the very time that I saw, that I had gone beyond *Hercules*, I found I came short of you. All this, which was capable of producing Envy in any Man's Soul, but mine, fill'd mine with so much Esteem and Affection, that you then took the place there, which you are now desiring, and perfectly finish'd what you think you are still to begin. After the Knowledge which I have had of you, how can I form such an Image of you, as you are willing to give me? How can I fancy you to be that little Creature you say you are? How could I comprehend what Heaven could place such mighty things in so small a space? When I give my Imagination a Loose, it gives you four Yards at least, and represents you of the Stature of Men engendered by Angels. Yet I shall be very glad to find that it is as you would have me believe. Amongst the rest of the advantages, which I expect to derive from you, I am in hopes that you will bring our nature into some Credit, and that it is ours

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18 *Voiture's Familiar Letters.*

which henceforward will be accounted the noblest ; and that by you, we shall be exalted above those who believe themselves higher than we. As we pour the most exquisite Essences into the smallest Bottles, Nature infuseth the divinest Souls into the smallest Bodies, and mixes more or less of Matter with them, as they have more or less in them of their Almighty Original. She seems to place the most shining Souls, as Jewellers set the most sparkling Stones, who make use of as little Gold as they can with them, and no more than just suffices to bind them. By you the World will be undeceiv'd of that sottish Error of valuing Men by their Weight, and my Littleness, with which I have been so often upbraided by *Madamoiselle de Rambouillet*, for the future may recommend me to her. For what remains, the Affection is very Just, which you tell me, she has for you, and with her, six more of the loveliest Creatures that illustrate the Light. But I wonder that you should think to get mine by such a Discovery ; and to gain it by the very Means, which were sufficient to make you lose it. You had need to have a high Opinion of my Goodness, to believe that I can love a Man who enjoys my Right, and who has obtain'd the Confiscation of my most valued

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Possessions: But yet I am so Just, that even this shall be no Impediment, and I believe you to have so much Justice on your side, that I do not despair but that we may accommodate ev'n this matter between us. They may very well have given you my Place without your putting me out of it, and my room in their Hearts was but very small, if it cannot contain us both. As for my part, I shall do my utmost, that I may not incommode you there; and shall take care to take up my Station so that we may not clash, since so powerful an Interest cannot make me cease to be yours, you may believe, that in spite of the worst of Accidents, I shall be eternally

Tours, &c.

BILLET, *from Madam de Saintot, to Monsieur de Voiture.*

I Have Promis'd to bestow you, for a Gallant, upon two fine Women, my Friends. I am confident that you will not find the Exploit too many for you, and do not doubt but that you will confirm my Promise, as soon as you have but seen them.

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The Answer of Monsieur de Voiture.

L Et me see what I love as soon as you can: For I die with Impatience till that happy Moment. And since, at your Command, I have fallen in Love, it behoves you to take some care that I am belov'd too. I have thought all Night upon the two Ladies that—— In short, upon you know whom. I write this Billet to one of them to deliver it, I beseech you, to her, whom you believe that I love the more passionately of the two. In Acknowledgment of the good Offices which I receive from you, I assure you, that you shall always dispose of my Affections; and that I will never love any one so much as your self, till I am convinc'd that you have in good earnest a Mind that I should.

To his unknown Mistress.

WAs there ever so extraordinary Passion, as that which I have for you? For my part, I do not know any thing of you; and to my knowledge I never so much as heard of you: And yet, Gad, I am desperately in Love with you

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and it is now a whole Day, since I have sigh'd, and look'd silly, and languish'd, and cry'd, and all that for you. Without having even seen your Face, I am taken with its Beauty ; and am charm'd with your Wit, tho' I never have heard one Syllable of it. I am ravish'd with your every Action, and I fancy in you a kind of I know not what, that makes me passionately in Love with I know not whom. Sometimes I fancy you Fair, and at other times Black ; Now you appear Tall to me, by and by Short ; Now with a Nose of the Roman shape, and anon with a Nose turn'd up : But in whatever Form I describe you, you appear the loveliest of Creatures to me ; and though I am ignorant what sort of Beauty yours is, I am ready to pawn my Soul, that it is the most Bewitching of all of them. If it be your Luck to know me as little, and to Love me as much, then thanks be to Love, and the Stars. But lest you should a little impose upon your self, in fancying me a tall Fair Fellow, and so be surpriz'd at the Sight of me, I care not for once, if I venture to send you my Picture : My Stature is three Inches below the middle one ; my Head appears tolerable enough, and is decently set off with a large grey Head of Hair ; then with Eyes that languish a little, yet are

22 Voiture's *Familiar Letters.*

something Hagard? I have a sort of a sudden cast of a Face: But in Requital, one of your Friends will tell you, that I am the honestest Fellow in the World; and that for Loving faithfully in five or six places at a time, there is no Man alive comes near me. If you think that all this will accommodate you, it shall be at your Service as soon as I see you; Till that long long'd for time, I shall think of you; that is, of I know not whom. But if any one should chance to ask me for whom I sigh, don't be afraid, I warrant to keep the Secret; I would fain see any one catch me at naming you to him.

To Mademoiselle Paulet.

Madam,

THere was only one thing wanting to your Adventures, and that was to be a Prisoner of State; I have given you here the happy occasion of being such: Fortune, who has omitted no Opportunity of bringing you into Play, will, in all probability, make her Advantage of this. I know very well, that I bring you into Danger by writing to you; yet cannot even that Reflection restrain me. From whence you may

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may conclude, that there is no Risk which I would refuse to run, to refresh your Remembrance of me, since I can resolve to endanger even you, you who are dear and valuable above all the rest of the World to me. I tell you this, Madam, at a time, when I would not lye, no, not in a Compliment : For I would have you to know, that I am much the better for the Distemper which I have lately had : It has caused me to assume such good Resolutions, that if I had them not, I could be contented to purchase them with all my Health. I plainly foresee, that this will but divert you, you that are conscious to so much of my Weakness ; and who will never believe that I can keep single Resolutions, I who have broken so many Vows ; yet nothing is more certain than that I have hitherto beheld the Spanish Beauties with as much indifference, as I did the Flemish at *Brussels* ; and I hope to grow a Convert in the very Place of the World in which the Tempter is strongest, and where the Devil resumes as glorious Shapes as what he put off when he fell. The Reformation is so great in me, that I have but one Scruple remaining, which is, that I think too often of you ; and that I desire to see you again with a little too much Impatience. I who have moderated

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the rest of my Passions, have been unable to reduce that which I have for you, to the Measure with which we are permitted to love our Neighbours; that is to say, as much as we do our selves; and I fear you have a larger share in my Soul, than I ought to allow a Creature. Look out, I beseech you, for a Remedy for this, or rather for an Excuse for it; for as for a Remedy, I believe there is none, and that I must be always, with utmost Passion,

Madam, Yours.

To the Marchioness of Rambouillet; in Answer to a Letter of Thanks of hers.

Madam,

THO' my Liberality should, as you tell me, surpass the Bounty of *Alexander*, it would nevertheless be richly recompenc'd, by the Thanks which you have return'd me for it. He himself as boundless as his Ambition was, would have confin'd it to so rare a Favour. He would have set more value upon this Honour, than he did on the Persian Diadem; and he would never have envied *Achilles* the Praise which he received from *Homer*, if he could but him-
self

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self have obtain'd Yours. Thus, Madam, on this Pinnacle of Glory on which I stand, if I bear any Envy to his, 'tis not so much to that which he acquir'd himself, as to that which you have bestow'd upon him, and he has received no Honours, which I do not hold inferior to mine, unless it be that which you did him, when you declar'd him your Gallant. Neither his Vanity, nor the rest of his Flatterers, could ever perswade him to believe any thing that was so advantageous to him, and the Quality of Son of *Jupiter Hammon*, was by much less glorious to him than this. But if any thing comforts me for the Jealousie which it has rais'd in me, 'tis this, Madam, that knowing you as well as I know you, I am very well assur'd, that if you have done him this Honour, 'tis not so much upon the account of his having been the Greatest of Mankind, as of his having been now these two thousand Years no more. However, we here find cause to admire the greatness of his Fortune, which not being able yet to forsake him so many years after his Death, has added to his Conquests a Person that gives them more Lustre than the Daughters and Wife of *Darius*; and which has gain'd him a mind more great than the World he Conquer'd. I ought here to be afraid, after
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26 *Voiture's Familiar Letters.*

ter your Example of Writing, in too lofty a Style: But how can the Writer be too Sublime who writes of you, and of *Alexander*? I humbly beseech you, Madam, to believe that I have equal Passion for you, with that which you shew for him; and that the Admiration of your Vertues will oblige me to be always,

Madam,

Tours, &c.

An

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 27

An Imitation of Monsieur de Voiture's Letter to Mademoiselle de Rambouillet: Being an Answer to that by which she had inform'd him, who was then with Monsieur in Exile, that the Academy designed to abolish the Particle Car, [For.]

That the Reader may be diverted with this Letter, he is desir'd to suppose, that there is a Club of Wits erected in London, for the Regulation of the Tongue, who have a Design to abolish it.

Madam,

FOR, being of so great Importance in our Tongue as it is, I extreamly approve of the Resentment you shew for the Wrong they design to do it; and I must needs declare, that I expect no good from this Club of Wits, which you mention, since they are resolved to establish themselves by so great an Oppression: Even at a time like this, when Fortune is acting her Tragedies throughout all *Europe*. I can behold nothing so deserving of Pity, as when I see they are ready to arraign and to banish a Word, which has so faithfully serv'd this Monarchy; and which, amidst
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28 Voiture's Familiar Letters.

all our English Confusions, has always been of the side of those who were truly English. For my part, I cannot for my Heart comprehend what Reason they can alledge against a Word, whose only Business is to go before Reason, and which has no other Employment than to usher it in. I cannot imagine what Interest can oblige them, to take away that which belongs to *for*, to give it to *Because that*; nor why they have a mind to say with three Syllables, that which they say with three Letters. That which I am afraid of, Madam, is this, That after they have been guilty of this one Injustice, they will not scruple at more; perhaps they may have the Impudence to attack *But*, and who knows if *If* may be any longer secure. So that after they have depriv'd us of all those Words, whose business it is to bring others together, the Wits will reduce us to the Language of Angels; or, if they cannot do that, they will at least oblige us to speak only by Signs: And here I must confess, that your Observation is true, *viz.* That no Example can more clearly shew us the Instability of Humane Affairs. He who had told me some Years ago, that I should have outliv'd *For*, I had thought had promis'd me a longer Life than the Patriarchs. And yet

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yet we see, that after he has maintain'd himself for some hundreds of Years, in full Force and Authority, after he has been employ'd in the most important Treaties, and has assisted in the Councils of our Kings with Honour, he is all of a sudden fallen into Disgrace, and threatned with a violent End. I now expect nothing less, than to be terrify'd with lamentable Cries in the Air, declaring to the World, that the Great *For* is Dead: for the Death of the Great *Cam*, or of the Great *Pan*, was, in my mind, less important. I know if we consult one of the finest Wits of the Age, and one whom I esteem with Passion he will tell us, that 'tis our Duty to condemn an Innovation like this, that we ought to use the *For* of our Fathers, as well as their Sun and their Soil, and that we should by no Means banish a Word, which was in the Mouths of our *Edwards* and of our *Henries*. But you, Madam, are the Person, who are principally oblig'd to undertake his Protection: For, since the Supreme Grace, and the Sovereign Beauty of the English Tongue lies in yours, you ought to command here with an absolute Sway, and with a Smile or a Frown, give Life or give Death to Syllables, as uncontroul'd as you do to Men. For this, I believe you have

30 Voiture's *Familiar Letters*.

have already secur'd it, from the imminent Danger which threatned it, and by vouchsafing it a Place in your Letter, have fix'd it in a Sanctuary and a Mansion of Glory, to which neither Envy nor Time can reach. But here, Madam, I beg leave to assure you, that I could not but be surpriz'd to see how fantastick your Favours are, I could not but think it strange, that you, who without Compassion could see a thousand Lovers expire, should not have a Heart to see a Syllable die. If you had but had half the Care of me, which you have shewn of *For*, I should then have been happy in spite of ill Fortune: Then Poverty, Exile, and Grief, would scarce have had force to come near me. If you had not deliver'd me from these Evils themselves, you had freed me at least from the Sence of them. But at a time that I expected to receive Consolation from yours, I found that your Kindness was only design'd to *For*, and that his Banishment troubled you more than ours. I must confess, Madam, it is but just, you should undertake his Defence; but you ought to have taken some care of me too, that People might not object to you, That you forsake your Friends for a Word. You make no Answer at all to that which I writ about; you take not the least Notice of
that

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 31

that which so much concerns me; In three or four Pages you scarce remember me once; and the Reason of this is *For*: Be pleased to consider me a little more for the future, and when you undertake the Defence of the Afflicted, remember that I am of the Number. I shall always make use of him himself, to oblige you to grant me this Favour, and to convince you that it is but my Due;
For

I am, &c.

To the Duke of Enguien, upon his Taking of Dunkirk.

I Am so far from wondring that you have taken *Dunkirk*, that I believe you could take the Moon by the Teeth, if you did but once attempt it. Nothing can be impossible to you: I am only uneasy about what I shall say to your Highness on this Occasion, and am thinking by what extraordinary Terms I may bring you to reach my Conceptions of you. Indeed, my Lord, in that height of Glory, to which you have now attain'd, the Honour of your Favour is a singular Happiness; but it is a troublesome thing to us Writers, who are obliged
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32 *Voiture's Familiar Letters.*

to Congratulate you upon every good Success, to be perpetually upon the Hunt for Words whose Force may answer your Actions, and to be every day inventing of new Panegyricks. If you would but have the Goodness to suffer your self to be beat sometime, or to rise from before some Town, the variety of the Matter might help to support us, and we should find out some fine thing or other to say to you, upon the Inconstancy of Fortune, and the Glory that is gotten by bearing her Malice bravely. But having, from the very first of your Actions, rank'd you equal with *Alexander*, and finding you rising upon us continually; upon my Word, my Lord, we are at a loss what to do, either with you or our selves. Nothing that we can say, can come up to that which you do, and the very Flights of our Fancy, flag below you. Eloquence, which Magnifies smallest things, cannot reach the Height of those which you do; no, not by its boldest Figures. And that which is call'd Hyperbole on other occasions, is but a cold way of speaking when it comes to be applied to you. Indeed it is different to comprehend, how your Highness each Summer has still found out means to augment that Glory, which every Winter seem'd at its full Perfection; and

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and that having begun so greatly, and gone on more greatly, still your last Actions should crown the rest, and be found the most Amazing. For my own part, my Lord, I congratulate your Success, as I am in Duty oblig'd ; but I plainly foresee, the very thing that augments your Reputation with us, may prejudice that which you expect from after Ages ; and that so many great and important Actions, done in so short a space, may render your Life incredible to future Times, and make your History be thought a Romance by Posterity. Be pleas'd then, my Lord, to set some Bounds to your Victories, if it be only to accommodate your self to the Capacity of Human Reason, and not to go further than Common Belief can follow you. Be contented to be quiet and secure, at least for a time, and suffer *France*, which is eternally alarm'd for your Safety, to enjoy serenely, for a few Months, the Glory which you have acquir'd for her. In the mean time, I beseech you to believe, that among so many Millions of Men who admire you, and who continually pray for you, there is not one who does it, with so much Joy, with so much Zeal and Veneration, as I, who am,

My Lord, your Highness's &c.

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To

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To the Duke of Enguien (afterwards the Great Prince of Conde) upon his gaining the Battle of Rocroy.

My Lord,

AT a time that I am so far remov'd from your Highness, that you cannot possibly lay your Commands upon me, I am fully resolv'd to speak freely my Mind to you, which I have so long been oblig'd to disguise, lest it should bring me into the same Inconvenience, with those, who before me have taken the like Liberties with you. But let me tell you, my Lord, you have done too much, to let it pass without taking Notice of it; and you are unreasonable if you think to behave your self as you do, without being loudly told of it. If you did but know how strangely all *Paris* talks of you, I am very confident that you would be asham'd of it; and you could not without Confusion hear, with how little Respect, and how little Fear of Displeasing you, all the World presumes to discourse of what you have done. I must confess, my Lord, I wonder what you could mean: You have shewn your self bold with a Vengeance, and Violent to the last Degree, in putting such an Affront upon

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on two or three old Captains, whom you ought to have respected, if it had been only for their Antiquity: in Killing the poor Count *de la Fontaine*, who was the very best Man in the *Low-Countries*; in Taking sixteen Pieces of Cannon, the proper Goods of the King's Uncle, and the Queen's own Brother; and in Confounding the Spanish Troops, after they had shewn so much Goodness in letting you Pass. I heard indeed, you are obstinate as a Devil, and that it was not to much purpose to dispute about any thing with you: But yet I never thought, that your Heart wou'd have transported you so far. If you go on at the rate you have begun, you will shortly grow Intolerable, I assure you, to all *Europe*, and neither the Emperor nor the King of *Spain* will either of them be able to endure you. But now, my Lord, laying the Man of Conscience aside, and resuming the Man of State: I felicitate your Highness for the Victory I hear you have gain'd, the most compleat, and the most important, which has happen'd in our Age. *France*, which you have shelter'd from all the Storms that it dreaded, is amaz'd to see that you have begun your Life with an Action, with which *Cæsar* would gladly have crown'd his own, and which alone re-

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flects more Lustre upon the Kings your Progenitors, than all theirs have transferred to you. Well, my Lord, you have verified what has been formerly said, That Vertue comes to the *Cæsars* preventing Time: For you, who are a true *Cæsar*, both in Wit and in Knowledge; *Cæsar* in Diligence and in Vigilance; in Courage *Cæsar*, and *per omnes Casus Cæsar*; you have out-run the Hopes, and surpass'd the Expectation of Men; you have clearly shewn, that Experience is necessary to none but ordinary Souls; that the Vertue of Heroes comes by a more compendious way, and that the Works of Heaven are finish'd when but begun. After this, I leave you to judge, how you are like to be receiv'd and carress'd by the Lords of the Court, and with what Pleasure the Ladies heard that he whom they had seen Triumphant in Balls, had been Victorious in Armies; and that the finest Head of all *France*, was likewise the best and the strongest. There is not a Man even to Monsieur *Beaumont*, who does not declaim in your Praise. They who had revolted against you, are now reduced; and they who complain'd that you were always Laughing, have been forced to confess, that you have shown your self now in good Earnest; and ev'ry one's afraid

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fraid of being of the Number of your Enemies, since you have defeated such Multitudes of them. Pardon, O *Cæsar*, the Liberty which I have taken; receive the Praise that is due to you; and permit us to render to *Cæsar*, that which is due to *Cæsar*.

To Monsieur de Balzac.

Sir,

IF it be true that I have always kept the Rank, which you tell me I have held in your Memory, methinks you have shewn but an indifferent Concern for my Satisfaction, in delaying so long to impart the pleasing News to me, and in suffering me so long to be the happiest of Men, without dreaming I was so. But perhaps you were of opinion, that this very good Fortune, was so infinitely above any thing that I could in reason hope for, that it was necessary you should take time to invent Arguments, which might render it Credible, and that you had an occasion to employ all the Power of Rhetorick to perswade me, that you had not forgot me. And thus far at least I must needs confess, that

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you have been very Just, that resolving to let me have nothing but Words for all the Affection you owe me, the Choice which you have made of them, has been so rich, and so beautiful, that, let me die, if I believe the thing they assure me of would be of greater Value: This, at least, I'm sure of, that they would suffice to Counterbalance any Friendship but mine. I am only discontented at one thing, and that is, that so much Artifice and so much Eloquence, should not be able to Disguise the Truth from me; and that in this I should resemble your own Shepherdesses, who are too silly to be beguiled by a Man of Wit. But indeed, you must excuse me if I am something inclin'd to suspect an Art, which could invent Commendations for a Quartan Ague, and an Art which you have at more command, than ever Man had before you. All those Graces, and that Air of the Court, which I much admire in yours, convince me rather of the Excellence of your Wit, than of the Goodness of your Will. And from all the fine things which you have said in my Favour, all that I can conclude, ev'n when I am inclin'd to flatter my self, is, That Fortune has been pleas'd to give me a place in your Dreams: Nay, I know not if the very Extravagancies of a Soul so

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exalted as yours, are not too serious, and too reasonable, to descend so low as to me. And I shall esteem my self too obligingly us'd by you, if you have but so much as dream'd that you Love me. For to imagine that you have reserv'd a Place for me amidst those sublime Thoughts, which are, at present, employed in Recompening the Vertues of all the World, and Distributing Shares of Glory to Mankind; to imagine this, would be extream Presumption in me. I have too great an Opinion of your Understanding, to believe that you could be guilty of any thing that is so much below you; and I should be unwilling, that your Enemies should have that to object to you. I am perfectly satisfied, that the only Affection which you can have justly for any one, is that which you owe to your self; and that Precept of Studying One's self, which is a Lesson of Humility to all besides you, ought to have a contrary Effect in relation to you, and oblige you to contemn, whatever you find without you. And therefore here let me swear to you, That without pretending to any Share in your Affection, I should have been very well satisfied, if you had preserv'd with never so little Care, the Friendship which I have vow'd eternally to have for you, and to have

40 *Voiture's Familiar Letters.*

placed it, if not amongst the things which you value, at least amongst those which you are not forward to lose. But in leaving me here with that lovely Rival, of whom you made mention in yours, you have shewn, let me tell you, too little Jealousie, and you have suffer'd her to gain so much Advantage of you, that I have reason to suspect that you have conspir'd with her, to do me a Mischief. And therefore I have more reason than you to complain, that she has enrich'd her self by your Losses, and that you have suffer'd her to get into her Power, that which I thought to have secur'd from her Tyranny, by entrusting it in your Hands. If you had been willing to have made never so little Defence, the better part of my self, had yet been our own; but you, by your Negligence, have suffer'd her to surprize it; and to advance her Conquest at such a rate over me, that tho' I shou'd surrender to you, all that remains of me, you wou'd not have so much as one half of that which you have lost. Nevertheless, let me assure you, That you have gain'd in my Esteem, as much as you have lost in my Affection; and that at the very time that I was beginning to Love you less, I was forced to Honour you more. I have seen nothing of yours since your
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Departure, which does not go beyond all that you had done before: And by your last Works, you have the Honour of Excelling him who surpass'd all others. It cannot therefore but appear strange, that when you have so much reason to be contented, you should yet be complaining, and that you your self should be the only great Man who remains dissatisfied with you. At present all *France* is listening to you, and you are indifferent to no Man who has but learn'd to Read. All who are concern'd for the Honour of their Country, are not more inquisitive after what the *Mareschal de Crequi* is doing, than they are after what is doing by you. And you are the Person who can make more Noise in your Solitude, than the most Happy and most Renown'd of our Generals, at the Head of Forty Thousand Men. Can you wonder then, that with so much Glory you should be obnoxious to Envy; and that the very same Judges with whom *Scipio* was Criminal, and who condemn'd *Aristides* and *Socrates*, should not unanimously do Justice to your Desert? The People can plead prescription for hating the very Qualities which they admire in any one. Every thing which transcends 'em, they think affronts 'em; and they can better bear with a common Vice,

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Vice, than an extraordinary Vertue. So that if that Law was in force amongst us, of Banishing the most Powerful for Authority or Reputation, I make no doubt, but that you would stand the Mark of the Publick Envy: and I believe ev'n Cardinal *Richlieu* would not run greater Hazard. But, for God sake, have a care of calling that your Misfortune, which is but that of the Age: And complain no more of the Injustice of Men, since all who have Worth, are of your side; and that amongst them, you have found a Friend, whom yet, perhaps, you may lose once more: At least, I shall do my utmost to put you into a condition of doing so. For every Man's Darling Vanity, at present, is to be accounted yours. For my own part, I have always in so publick a manner profess'd my self so, that if through ill Fortune I should not be able to Love you so much as I have done, yet here let me swear to you, That you shall be the only Man to whom I will dare to declare it; and that I will always own my self to the rest of the World, to be as much as ever,

Tours, &c.

To

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 43

To the Marquess of Pisani, who had lost all his Money and his Baggage, at the Siege of Thionville.

The Character of the Marquess of Pisani, was a Man of Honour, Generosity, and Courage; but an Extravagant, Ignorant, Obstinate, Disputing Gamester.

Sir,

TH E Man would be to blame, or I have been very much misinform'd, who should upbraid you with having had the Mules to keep, at your Camp of *Thionville*: The Devil a Mule have you kept there, Sir. They tell me, that upon the weighty Consideration, that several Armies have been formerly lost by their Baggage; you have made all possible haste to be disencumber'd of yours. And that having often read in the Roman Histories, (this it is to be such a Man of Reading, look you) that the greatest Exploits that were done by their Cavalry, were done on Foot, after having voluntarily dismounted in the Extremity of the most doubtful Battles, you took a Resolution to dispatch away all your Horses, and have manag'd Matters so swingly, that you have not so much

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as one Left. And now, *the important Person stands on his own Legs.*

Perhaps, you may receive some small Inconvenience from this: But let me die, if it be not much for your Honour, that you as well as *Bias*, honest old *Bias*, I warrant you know him so wondrous well, should be able to say, that you carry all that is yours about you. No great quantity I must confess of Foppish Accoutrements, nor a long Train of Led-horses, nor abundance of that which they call the Ready; but Probity, Generosity, Magnanimity, Constancy in Dangers, Obstinacy in Disputes, a Contempt of all Foreign Languages, Ignorance of False Dice, and a surprising Tranquility upon the Loss of Transitory Things: Qualities, Sir, which are properly and essentially yours; and of which neither Time nor Fortune can ever deprive you. Now as *Euripides*, who was, as you know, or as you know not, one of the gravest Authors of *Greece*, writes in one of his Tragedies, that Money was one of the Evils, and one of the most pernicious ones that flew from *Pandora's Box*; I admire as a Divine Quality in you, the Incompatibility which you shew for it, and look upon it to be a distinguishing Mark of a Great and Extraordinary Soul, that
you

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you are uneasie till you are rid of this Corrupter of Reason, this Pois'ner of Souls, this Author of so much Disorder, of so much Injustice, and of so many Violences. Yet I could heartily wish, that your Virtue were not arriv'd at such an extraordinary Pitch, that you could be brought to some Accommodation with this Enemy of Human Kind, and that you might be persuaded to make Peace with it, as we do with the Great Turk for Politick Reasons, and the Advantage of Commerce. Now upon Consideration, that it is a difficult matter to be much at one's Ease without it, and fancying, that as I play'd for you at *Narbonne*, you threw for me at *Thionville*; and that it is perhaps in my Name, that you have pack'd off your Baggage, I here send you a hundred Pistols at present in part of Payment; and, that these may not meet with the same Fate which beset their Predecessors, I desire you not to defile your Hands with them, but to deliver them to the French Gentlemen who are with you, for whose sake I chiefly remit them.

I am, &c.

The End of Mr. Dennis's Translation.

To

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To Mademoiselle de Bourbon,

*A Relation of the Author's being toss'd
in a Blanket.*

By Tho. Cheek, Esq;

Madam,

LAST *Friday* in the Afternoon I was toss'd in a Blanket; because I failed of making you Laugh in the time that was given me. *Madam de Rambouillet* pronounc'd the Sentence, at the request of her Daughter, and *Mademoiselle Paulet*. They had deferr'd the Execution till the return of the Princess, and your self; but they bethought themselves afterwards, not to delay it any longer; and that it was very improper to put off my Punishment to a time, which ought to be wholly devoted to Pleasure. 'Twas in vain to cry out and make Resistance; the Blanket was brought, and four of the lustiest Fellows they cou'd get, were pick'd out for this Service. I may venture to affirm to you, *Madam*, that no Man was ever yet in so exalted a Condition as I was, and I cou'd not have believed that Fortune wou'd ever have rais'd me so high. At every Toss they threw

me

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me out of Sight, and sent me higher than a Soaring Eagle. I saw the Mountains crouching far below me, the Winds and Clouds traveling beneath my Feet. I discover'd Countries that I never had seen, and Seas I never had thought of. Certainly nothing cou'd be more diverting, than to see so many things all at once, and to discover half the Globe at one View: But I assure you, Madam, all this cannot be seen without some Disturbance; when one is in the Air, and certain of falling down again. That which frighted me the most was, That, when I was very high, looking downwards, the Blanket appear'd so small, that I thought it impossible to fall into it; and that I confess was some trouble to me: But, among so many different Objects, which at the same time struck my Sight, there was one which for some Moments took away my Fear, and touch'd me with real Pleasure: 'Twas this, Madam, Being desirous to look towards *Piedmont* to see what pass'd there, I saw you at *Lyons*, as you cross'd the *Saone*; at least, I saw a great Light upon the Water, and abundance of Rays about the most charming Face in the World: I could not well discern who was with you, because at that time my Head was lower-most; and I believe you did not see me, for you look'd another way; I made

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made Signs to you as well as I could : but as you began to look up, I fell down again, and one of the Tops of the Mountain *Tarara* hindred you from seeing me : As soon as I came down, I told 'em that I had seen you, and, as I was going to tell 'em how you did, they all fell a Laughing as if it had been a thing impossible, and immediately began to make me leap higher than before. There happen'd to me a very strange Accident, which will seem incredible to those who have not seen it : One time when they had tofs'd me to a very great height, coming down, I found my self in a Cloud, which being very thick, and I extreamly light, I was a great while intangled in it, before I could fall down again ; so that they stay'd a long time below, spreading the Blanket, and looking up without being able to imagine what was become of me. By good Luck there was no Wind stirring, for if there had, the Cloud in Marching would have carried me off one side or t'other and so I must have inevitably fallen to the Ground, which could not have happen'd without hurting me very much. But a more dangerous Accident succeeded this ; The last time they threw me into the Air, I found my self amongst a Flock of Cranes, who at first were mightily surpriz'd to see

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me so high; but when they came near me, they took me for a Pigmy, with whom, you know, Madam, they have perpetual War, and thought I came to 'em as a Spy into the middle Region; immediately they fell upon me with great stroaks of their Beaks, and with such Violence, that I imagin'd myself struck with a hundred Daggers. And one of them that had taken me by the Leg, pursu'd me so furiously, that she did not leave me till I was in the Blanket. This made my Tormentors afraid to send me back to the Mercy of my Enemies; who were now got together in great numbers, and hover'd in the Air, expecting me again. At last they carried me home again in the Blanket, but so dispirited as never Man was: To tell you the truth, this Exercise is a little too violent for one of my tender Constitution. I leave it to you, Madam, to judge, how cruelly I have been dealt with, and for how many Reasons you are obliged to condemn this Action; and to deal plainly with you, you that are born with so many commanding Qualities, should think it highly concerns you to begin betimes to hate Injustice, and to take those that are oppress'd into your Protection: I beseech you then, Madam, in the first place, to declare this an Outrage you by no

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means

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means approve; and for Reparation of my Honour, and my Strength, to order a great Canopy of Gause, to be set up for me in the blew Chamber of the House of *Rambouillet*, where I shall be waited on, and magnificently entertain'd for a whole Week, by the two Ladies who were the cause of this Misfortune; that at one Corner of the Room they shall be continually making Sweet-meats; one of 'em shall blow the Fire, and t'other shall do nothing else but put Syrup upon Plates to cool, and bring it me as often as I have occasion. Thus, Madam, you will do a deed of Justice, worthy of so great and beautiful a Princess, and I shall be obliged to be with the utmost Sincerity and Respect,

Madam, Tour, &c.

To Madam de Rambouillet.

By Mr. Raphson, Fellow of the Royal Society.

Madam,

HOW threaten'g soever your Letter be, I could not chuse but admire its Beauty, and wonder how you could join the *obliging* and the *terrible* Stile with so much Artifice together. You make me think of the Gold

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Gold and Azure we find on the Skins of our Snakes; you do as it were enamel the sharpest Reflections, with the liveliest Colours of Eloquence; and, in reading them, I cannot forbear to be pleased with those very things which most Affright me. You soon began to be as good as your Word, when you told me that you would no longer smile, than Fortune frown'd on me: In the same Minute she seems to have granted me a little Repose, you begin to disquiet me, and shew me, that tho' I have escaped the Dangers of the Seas and Pyrates, I am not yet in Safety, and that you are more dreadful than they. I could not have thought, Madam, that for having refused a Quarrel with your Dwarf, I should have contracted one with yourself, nor that I should be obliged to answer a Challenge, because I did a Complement: If you think I fail'd in that, you ought rather to call it Respect and Fear, than Contempt; and believe that the same Creature who disarm'd Monsieur *de M*—— of his Sword, made my Pen fall from my Hand. Altho' he might have some reason to complain, yet you had none to take his part against me; and if you wish me Ill for his sake, I may justly say you quarrel with me on the least Occasion in the World.

If you are resolved to Persecute me, all
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the Excuses I can alledge, will signifie nothing; and I can only wonder you take so much pains to find a Pretence for it. It will be no Advantage to me, to have come so far thro' so many Dangers; I shall find *Algiers* where-ever you are; and tho' I am in *Brussels*, yet I never was so near Captivity, or being Shipwrack'd. However, don't perswade your self, Madam, that the Flames of those Animals wherewith you threaten me, can make me afraid. I have long since learn'd to defend my self from those sorts of Mischiefs; and whatever you can say, I am more apprehensive of Death from your Eyes, than your Hands. Among all the Passages of your Letter, which seems to be admirable in all its parts, I took particular notice of that, where you tell me how great a pleasure it wou'd have been to you, if I had been taken by the Pyrates; I can't but attribute it to your extraordinary Goodness, that you cou'd wish I had been two or three Years chain'd to an Oar in the *Turkish* Gallies, that so my Voyage might have been more diversified. 'Twas a Curiosity I can never enough commend in you, to desire to know how I could look after and dress the Camels of *Barbary*, and with what unshaken Constancy I could bear *Bastinado's*! After the rate you talk, I suppose you would have

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have been glad, if I had been *embal'd* for half an Hour, to have satisfied you how it felt, and what I thought of it: But that which is yet more surprizing, these kind Wishes, you say, you bestow'd upon me, after you had reassum'd the mild Form of Woman, and were somewhat appeas'd; neither can I any more reconcile to Justice the Quarrel you would pick with me about *Alcidalis*: Judge, Madam, if being embark'd in the same Seas with him, and in the same Dangers, I could forget those Perils which I suffer'd, to recount those he had gone through; and while I lay under my own Misfortunes, if I was at leisure to write a History of his? Notwithstanding, I did not omit it in the midst of my Troubles; I writ above a hundred Sheets of his History, and took a particular care of his Life, at a time when I can swear to you, I took none of my own. But, Madam, don't make an Estimate from hence of the Care I take to please my Female Acquaintance. After I have render'd you all the Services I can, those Shadows can only shew you the least part of the Passion I have for your Concerns. If you would know that, consider it rather in the Cause than in the Effects. But your Imagination, how lively and wonderful soever it is, falls short of that; and if there is any

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thing in the whole World greater than your Soul, and which is beyond its Comprehension, it is the Respect, Affection, and Esteem it has bred in mine. Being no less sensible to acknowledge the Obligations I owe to other excellent Persons, you'll think that the Letter I receiv'd at the same time with yours, brought me an infinite Satisfaction, as well as an extream Honour. You knew better than any one, the Inclination and Respect I have always had for the Merits of the Person who writ it, and you may remember in the time of the Civil Wars between you two, I have sometimes left your part to take his. But this last Goodness of his, has gained my Heart ; and since I have received it, pardon me if you please, that I at certain intervals esteem him above any other Person in the World: But that you may not think, Madam, that it is you who have procured me all the Favours I receive from him, I assure you that on another Occasion very lately he has done me a piece of Service, without your being privy to it: Altho' it is none of those I take the most Pleasure in receiving, and it has given me a new Subject of reflecting on my ill Fortune, yet I esteem it a great Honour to owe Obligations to him, which I should be ashamed

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shamed to do to any other, and I am proud to receive any Marks of his Generosity. He'll swear, when you speak to him of it, he knows not what you mean; and methinks I now see him telling you so: but you know his Humour and Temper, never to forget to do a good Action, and never to remember it when it is done. Since the Honour of your Esteem for me has been the first Motive to establish me in his Favour, I humbly beg your Assistance, Madam, to return him those Thanks I owe him, and that way to pay him at least as far as I can at present. I kiss a thousand times the Feet of that incomparable Person who was pleased to write with her own Hand the Superscription of the Letter you sent me, and with four or five Words, rendered that Present inestimable, which was almost invaluable before. You have a great deal of Reason to call her the most charming and agreeable Person in the World, who can relieve the Distressed at such a Distance. I wish that she, who so well knows how to manage her Favours, may have all the Happiness due to so much Goodness, Beauty and Vertue together, tho' I know this Wish is very Extensive. I hear that the Lady whom I used to call the Morning-Star, is become Greater and more Admirable

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than ever, and that it at the same time enlightens and burns all *France*; although its Beams scarce reach the dark Shades where we live, yet its Reputation does, and as far as I can understand, the Sun is not so bright as it. I am glad the Intelligence that animates it, has lost nothing of its Force and Light, and that there is nothing but the Soul of *Mademoiselle de Bourbon*, that can make us doubt whether her Beauty is not the most perfect thing in the World. The manner as I have seen in one of your Letters she condoles me in, appears, admirably fine: indeed so many Crosses I have met with, ought to stir up Pity in her; in her, I say, who is so well acquainted with my Weakness, and who knows that from my Cradle, I have not had one day of Repose. It has been disturbed at the Postscript of your Letter, addressed to King *Chiquito*. In the Hell of *Anastarax*, I found mine, and have wandred in it three Nights and Days, yet cou'd not see at all. This was a most sensible Affliction to me, for I desired above any thing in the World, to have the Comb of King *Georgia*; I have had a mind to it above these two Years. But since you pretend to so much Guessing, imagine if you please, Madam, all I would farther say, if I durst make my Letter longer. Guess how much

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much more I honour and esteem you than I did two Years ago ; and think with how much Passion I am,

Mademoiselle,

Brussels, Jan. 4.

Tours, &c.

1634.

To the Cardinal de la Valette.

In Answer to a kind Letter he sent him.

By the same Hand.

My Lord,

I Am apt to believe, when you writ me the last Letter, you were pleased to Honour me with, that you thought the Esteem I have always had for you, had acquired you some Reputation in the World: That on all Occasions, I had given you infinite Testimonies of the Honour of my Friendship, and had for that reason lent you two thousand Crowns on an extraordinary Occasion; and that at such a time when all your Credit fail'd you else-where; and at such a Juncture too, that otherwise your Reputation must have for ever sunk. At least, after the rate you return your Thanks, and speak of your self and me, I have reason to believe, that in a Dream you have mistaken the one for the other, and put your self in my Place. Otherwise, my Lord, you would not write after

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after that manner you do, unless, perhaps you are of Opinion, that there is no greater Good in the World, than to do so to others, and think those oblige you, who give you an Opportunity of obliging them, and imagine you receive the Pleasures you give: Certainly if it be so, there is no Man in the World to whom you are more obliged than to me; and I deserve all the Thanks you return me, since I have given you more occasions, than any one else, of exercising your Generosity, and doing Actions of Goodness, which without doubt, are to be esteemed beyond all the Wealth you have, or can ever bestow on me. Among the great Number of good Offices I have received from you, and among so many Favours you have been pleased to bestow upon me, I assure you, my Lord, I Esteem nothing so much as the Letter you vouchsafed to Write to me; and if among so many Things which affected me with Joy, there is any one thing that did so above the rest, I must needs beg your leave to tell you, it is that, where you mention the two Persons who deserve all the Respect we can pay them, and to whom, if we compare them not one to another, there is nothing under the whole Heaven they can be compared to. When

think

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think that I am in their Memory, for that Moment my Pains cease; and whenever, I represent to my self the Image of either the one or the other, the very Face of my Fortune seems to be changed, and that Imagination chases from my Spirit the Darkness which oppressed it, and fills it with Light: But that which is still a greater Happiness, though I am so far from ever having deserved the Honour of their Favour, yet I flatter my self that I have some share in it; and I am so happy as to believe what you tell me concerning it. I know one, my Lord, who would not be so easily perswaded, if he were in my place, and who after two Years Separation could not live in so much Tranquility, nor with so great Assurance. In the Satisfaction which that Belief gives me, be pleased to judge if I am much to be lamented, and if there are not many whom the World calls Happy, that don't deserve the name so well as I. Without this, I could not defend my self from the general Sorrow which invades us on all sides, nor resist the Melancholy of Monsieur *de C—*, whom I am forced every day to contend with, and who is in Truth much above what is commonly imagined of him. Besides the Fancy he has taken to let his Beard grow, which
already

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already reaches down to his Middle, he affects a Tone more severe than ever, and which comes very near the sound of *Astolphus's* Horn: Unless he were to treat of the Immortality of the Soul, the Supreme Good, or one of the most Important Questions of Moral Philosophy, he could not Bawl louder than he does in his Ordinary Conversation. Should *Democritus* come again, tho' he was so great and celebrated a Philosopher, he would not bear with him, because he was given to the horrid Sin of Laughing; nay, he has undertaken to Reform the Doctrine of *Zeno*, as not rigid enough, and is going to Institute a new Order, called *Stoic Capuchins*. So that, my Lord, wish no extraordinary Blessing for that People, whose Governor you wish him to be.

To

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 61

*To a Young Lady, Maid of Honour
to His Royal Highness's Daughter.*

By Henry Cromwell, Esq;

Madam,

HAVING been ever sensible of the Power of your Eloquence, assist me, I beseech you, in returning my acknowledgments to the fairest, and most generous Princess of the World: For, I Swear, I have been Opprest with her Bounties, and must declare, that there is not any thing under Heaven, so Lovely and so Charming, as the Mistress whom you serve; I had almost said, whom we serve: And, indeed what would I not give, that I might thus express it? From the first Moment that I heard her, I presently concluded, that there was not in the World so great a Genius as hers; but the Care she has been pleas'd to take of me, above all things amazes me, and I cannot sufficiently admire, how, among such elevated Thoughts, she can have room for any so trivial; and how a Mind in all things else so high, can descend so low. The Pastils which were presented me this Morning, have had a

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wondrous Effect upon me, and I can not imagine from whence this Miracle proceeds, unless from a Touch of her Royal Highness's Hand; for I find my self infinitely better, by having kiss'd the Paper only that inclosed 'em: This as long as I live shall be my Antidote against all sorts of Ills, and there is but one, for which so pleasing a Remedy as this can have no Cure: But lest you should too curiously inquire, what this is I mean, 'tis much better that I should explain my self, and tell you, that 'tis the Trouble, to have so seldom the Sight of her, and to be destin'd to live far from the only Person who deserves to be Adored: if you reflect upon this, it will appear the greatest of Misfortunes; and 'tis very hard to be a Man of Honour, and survive it.

To

To the Marchioness de Rambouillet,
upon Absence.

By the same Hand.

Madam,

MY Lady, your Mother, must excuse me; but never any thing was so tiresome to me as *Rome*: Not a day passes, but I see something that's wonderful; Master-pieces of the greatest Artists that ever were; Gardens where there is an everlasting Spring; Buildings that are not to be equal'd. in the World, and Ruins yet more Beautiful than they: But all this that I tell you hath no power to divert me, and at the same time that I see 'em, I wish my self far from 'em: The most excellent Paintings, Sculptures, and Portraitsures of *Apelles*, *Praxiteles*, *Papardelle*, have no Charms for me. I shou'd be amaz'd at this, were I not sensible of the Cause, and did not well know that a Person who has been accustom'd to the sight of you, cou'd never be easie when he did not enjoy it: For to tell you the Truth, Madam, I have the same Sense of you, as of Health; I never so well knew your Value, as when I have lost you: and
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although, when I am near you, I manage it not always so well as to maintain my self with you, yet from the Moment that I behold you no more, I seek you with a thousand Wishes. I call to mind that you are the most precious of Worldly Things, and I find by Experience, that all the Delights of the Earth, are harsh and disagreeable without you : I had more Pleasure some time ago in two or three turns at *Ruel* with you, than I have had since, in seeing all the Vine-yards of *Rome*, or that I shou'd have to see the *Capitol*, tho in all its ancient Splendor, with even *Jupiter Capitolinus* there in Person ; but that you may know that this is no Railery, and that I am really as Ill as I express it, 'tis but eight Days since, that walking in the Morning with the *Chevalier de Fars*, I had fallen all along if he had not received me in his Arms ; and the next Evening I swoon'd once more in the Apartment of the *Marshall de Estree's*. The Physicians say that those are Melancholy Vapours, and that these Accidents are not to be neglected, as for me, since this has taken me two days successively, and that I was threatn'd with something worse, I have neither been stupid nor insensible ; but have taken some Antimony which *Monfieur Nerli* gave me, this

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this has done me some good, and I'll bring four Doses with me, which I will perswade the Dutchess *d' Ainguillon* to take; for there is no Volatile Salt which can have so good Effect: and this we must be contented with, till he that hath given me it, shall find the Receipt of the *Aurum Potabile*, which Secret, as he says, he shall attain to in a Year at least. I hope to leave this place in a Week; you will be amaz'd that I can continue so long in a Place which I tell you I have been so tyr'd with; but I have been kept here till now, by some things which I will acquaint you with, and which I have not yet been able to dispatch; but I assure you once more, that I never in my Life was so uneasie and so impatient to see you; I humbly beseech you to do me the Honour to believe me, and to be assur'd that I am much more than I can here express,

Rome.

Madam-yours.

F

To

66 Voiture's Familiar Letters!

To Monsieur Costart, Desiring him
to Write a Latin Letter for him.

By——

Monsieur,

YOU will be surprized that I sollicite your Assistance in an Affair on t^{ro}ther side the Mountains; that I beg your Succour against the *Romans*: It is not the first time as you know, that they have disturbed the Quiet of those that troubled themselves not with them. But I think they were never so unjust to any body as to me; they never gave *Hannibal* more Vexation than they will me, if you do not help me: *Quorsum hæc*, I'll tell you; They have among them an *Academy* of Men, that call themselves *Humourists*, that is as much as to say fantastical; and indeed, they must be so, to take a fancy to admit me into their Number, and to advise me of it by a Letter from one of their Society. I must write him an Answer of Thanks in Latin; and this 'tis puts me in such pain. But I have been eas'd from the Moment that I thought of you, for this methinks is your true Talent, and a Man that lives in *Poitou*, and writes Latin Letters out of Wantonness, can't refuse me one.

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one. Their Device is a Sun raising Vapours from the Sea, which falls back again in Rain, with this *Motto* out of *Lucretius*, *Fluit agmine dulci*: Pray try what you can say upon this, and upon the Honour which they have done me, and my want of merit. Monsieur *Pauquet* will be sure not to fail us, and he knows more than either you or I: I leave this matter wholly to you two; for I am no way capable of it, whereas you can do it if you please.

*Me dulcis dominae Musa Lycimniæ,
Cantus, me voluit dicere lucidum
Fulgentes oculos, & bene mutuis,
Fidum Pectus amoribus.*

She has been gone this nine Days: Poor *Lycimnia*! Without Lying, I love her better than my self, but not better than you,

I am, Monsieur, &c.

To Madam—

TO acquaint me with your Sufferings, is the way to redouble mine: and I that have supported my own with so much Patience, doubt whether I shall be able to bear

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bear up under yours. But whatever happens, I can't indure too much, since it is for Love of you, and the two Words which you have put in your Billet, out of Rank from the rest, are enough to render any thing supportable, and make me cheerfully embrace Martyrdom. I suppose you have no doubt of it, and that you are assur'd of my Resolution, since after having warned me of the Mischief you intend me, you expect that I should come and meet you: and that after Dinner, I should voluntarily appear in a place where my Pains are to be increas'd. These Menaces wou'd terrifie any one but my self, and make a wiser Man than I, provide for his Security: But whatsoever Danger I foresee, it's impossible for me to disobey you: Or having the Honour of knowing you, so well as I do, to forbear being,

Madam, Tours, &c.

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Voiture's Familiar Letters, 69

To the same.

I Have forgot all that I shou'd say to——
to whom you wou'd reconcile me and I
assure you 'tis not because I have slept since ;
I am sorry to have so little Concern for a Per-
son so well recommended to me, and that
not being able to afford her any room in my
Affection, she had no more in my Memory.
It's the part of my Soul in which I may
with most Justice allow her a place, being
that which is most opposite to the Judg-
ment, and wherein things past are laid up.
But if I say any thing obliging to her after
Dinner, she shall not be able to complain
that I talk to her by heart ; for I find that I'm
so much a Stranger to all that I have to say
to her, that if you do not quickly relieve
me, you shall see that I know no more than
you, either the Words or Time : I wish
you knew no better that of your departure.
For without lying, I have not Courage to
endure the bare thought of it, which stifles
in me all others. When I think that to-
Morrow you will be no longer here, I am
surpris'd that I am to Day in the World,
and I am ready to confess to you that there
is some Faction in this Love, which I
testifie, when I consider that I yet breathe,

70 *Voiture's Familiar Letters.*

and that my Displeasure has not yet finish-
ed my Days. Others have lost their Speech
and confin'd themselves to inaccessible
Solitudes for less Misfortunes than mine.
I own that I could not go so far from
you, to vent my Grief, but I am methinks
to be excused for not seeking a Cell in
the Desarts of *Ægypt*, since I hope for a
place in that which you are making. It is
this Hope only, which keeps me in the
World, and my Life hangs only on this
Expectation. I know not whether all that
I here say be within the bounds of a passio-
nate Friendship, but you cannot accuse me
of speaking too intelligibly, since all my
words will bear a double Construction; nor
complain that I do not write to you in such
Terms as you desire, since I never met with
the Person that shou'd inform me what
those are: So long as some Allowance is
made for my Failings, and that I may tell
you some part of my thoughts, I swear to you
by the same Affection that I did Yesterday,
that the only Folly I shall ever be guilty
of, shall be always to love the most amiable
Person that ever was, and that I will be
content to be hated by you, when ever I
offer you my Friendship.

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 71

To Diana.

By the same Hand.

Madam,

IF you are as sensible of the Uneasiness of not seeing what you love, as I am; if you suffer, during this Absence, any thing like what I endure; What Considerations, charming *Diana*, could prevail upon you, to be two Days without seeing me? Why do not we rather hazard the other Extremity, than this which our Misfortune reduces us to? Is it reasonable, to hinder four or five People from prating and observing our Satisfaction we should sacrifice it, and to prevent a little Noise, endure so much Misery? No, no, my dear *Diana*, the greatest Misfortune that can befall us, is to be separated from one another; I know nothing that we ought so much to fear: Do not think that our Love is a whit the more private, for the pains we take to conceal it; the Dejection which is visible in my Countenance, speaks plainer than any body can do. Let us then lay aside a Discretion which cost us so dear, and give me, after Dinner, an Opportunity of seeing you, if you would have me live.

To the President of the Household.

By * *

Sir,

M Adam *de Marfilly* believes that I have some Int'rest in you ; and I, who am vain enough to be thought to have it, have not inform'd her to the contrary, She is a Lady esteem'd at Court, and that may influence the Parliament ; and if she succeeds in a Cause to be heard before you, believing that I have contributed to her Success, you cannot imagine the Credit it will do me amongst the better part of the World : I can propose nothing to byass you farther than by putting you in mind of my Interest, because I know your own can never engage you. To serve a Friend, and to do Justice, which is all we demand, are things the severest Judges may be solicited for : and I shall be sensible you do 'em both to me, if you continue loving me as much as you have done hitherto, and if you believe that I am

Yours.

To

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 73

*To Monsieur d'Emer, Comptroller
General of the King's Revenues.*

By the same Hand.

Sir,

SINCE you won't permit me to mention some of your Letters, pray give me leave to take notice of that you writ to Monsieur d'Arfes upon my Account, and to tell you, there are very few in *France*, that can write in such a Manner, particularly where you say that to accommodate my Affair you'll advance a Sum of Money; you must pardon me, if I am of Opinion that to offer twenty thousand Livers to do a Friend a Service, is so gallant a way of Writing, that there are few capable of expressing themselves in such a Stile. Even we of the Academy of the *Beaux Esprits*, are not able to boast of any Turn of Thought equal to this.

The

74 *Voiture's Familiar Letters.*

The Abridgment of a Letter to Monsieur D'Avaux.

By the same Hand.

V *Is ergo inter nos, quid possit uterq; vicissim, Experiamur:* No, I beg your Pardon, Sir, *Apollo* tells me I am overmatch'd, and I am resolv'd to take his Advice: nor am I concern'd that you have so far exceeded me in your last Letter, because there you have even exceeded your self: I must tell you, I am jealous of the very Praises you give me; they are so artful and ingenious, that I shou'd be prouder of being capable of giving than receiving them; and the very Words wherein you tell me how much I am above others, shew me how much more you deserve that Compliment; every Line of your Letter is extraordinary, especially the Picture You draw of *Madam de Longueville*, which is so ravishing, that the sight of the Original cou'd not have transported me more. You say 'tis wonderfull, that at a Treaty for Peace, you cannot be safe in *Munster*, notwithstanding the Pass-ports from the Emperour and the King of *Spain*; that is, Sir, you cannot be secure in *Munster* because *Madam de Longueville* is there.

When

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 75

When you upbraid me, that you have had but one Letter from me in a whole Year, and that I cannot hold out to Write twice successively with the same Force, I cannot but acknowledge that even your reprimands are not less obliging than your Praise, except where you tell me I am fifty Years old, and where you upbraid me with my Spectacles and grey Hairs. Before I make an end of this Letter, I must send you the Compliment of Madam *de Sable*, and Madam *Monthausier* : I have shown them both these Passages of your Letter, where you speak of Madam *de Longueville* ; for the rest, fear not that any shall see it, especially that part where you speak of fifty Year old. You must know, that here I am but forty seven, therefore pray let me be no more at *Munster*. I had almost forgot to tell you, those Ladies commanded me to say, that if you speak but as well as you write, Madam *de Longueville* cannot be tedious in any place where you are. They swear there is no Person upon Earth has Wit enough but your self, and I tell them that I have thought the same thing these five and twenty Years ; but I must detain you no longer,

— *Ne me Crispini Scrinia lippi,
Compilasse putes. Verbum non amplius addam.*

76 *Voiture's Familiar Letters.*

To Madam-----

By Henry Cromwell, Esq;

Madam,

THe Letter which you desired to see is not worth the least Line of that in which you command it; but you, who were Yesterday so devout, do you make no scruple to write such Things in the Holy-week, and do you not apprehend the Consequence of 'em, and what Effect they may have? I had set my Conscience at rest, and for that reason had resolved never to see you more. But your Letter has given me a new Disorder; and as well as another, I have suffer'd my self to be overcome by your Pearls, and your four thousand Livres. I could not have thought, that you wou'd ever have made use of such Means, to regain a Lover, or that these sort of Things cou'd have had any Power over me: And I assure you, 'tis the first time that I have let my self be dazled with Riches. So to tell you the Truth, the Pearls were never so well set as they are in your Letter; and your four thousand Franks as you have manag'd 'em, are worth more than three hundred thousand;

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 77

land: You are an incomprehensible Person, and I cannot sufficiently Admire, how, without reading *Herodotus*, and making use of the *Saturnalia*, you can write such delicate Letters: As for me, Madam, I begin to imagine that you have deceiv'd us, I believe you are acquainted with the source of *Nilus*, and that Spring from whence you draw all these fine Things, which you say, is much more secret and unknown: in fine, whatsoever your Steward says, 'tis not the Marchioness *d' Sable*, who is the finest Person in the World: you have more Charms in a corner of an Eye, than there is in all the rest of the Earth: Nor have all the Charms of Magick a Power comparable to those you write.

To Madam—

By the same Hand.

YOU may be assur'd that neither Grief nor Love will ever be the Death of any Person, since neither the one nor the other have yet kill'd me; and that having been too Days without the Honour of seeing you, I have some appearance of Life
re-

78 *Voiture's Familiar Letters.*

remaining: If any thing cou'd have made me resolve upon a Distance from you, 'twas the Belief I had that Death wou'd have been the only Consequence, and that so great a Pain as that wou'd not suffer me long to have languished: Notwithstanding, I find, beyond all my Hopes, that I last much longer than I imagine; and whatsoever Mortal Wounds I have, I believe, my Soul cannot detach its self from my Heart, because it sees your Image there: This is the only Pretence that I find not to tax it with Cowardice, and the only Reason that shou'd detain it so long in a Place, where its Sufferings are so great. From that Hour when you saw me dragg'd by four Horses, and tore in pieces at my Separation from you: I swear to you, that I have not yet dryed my Eyes, and although they can no longer distinguish Colours, or discern the Light, yet will they serve more faithfully than ever, in assisting me to Weep for your Absence: Tormented and Languishing as I am, methinks I am left all alone upon the Earth, or that I have been transported into that corner of the world, where the Sun is not much oftner seen, than Comets here with us, and where the shortest Night is three Months long: But that Misfortune wou'd not be the worst that might

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 79

might befall me, if this present Night of mine lasted no longer; but I doubt if after so long time I shall see the Light again; Judge, I beseech you to what Extremity I am reduc'd, that being only at the Entrance of so long and melancholy a Night, I already begin to count the Hours, and every lingering Moment with Impatience. Oh! that amidst the Darkness that overwhelms me, there were at least some Intervals of Repose, and that I cou'd sometimes have pleasing Dreams, but what ever my waking Dreams are, they are never so Extravagant as to propose to me any thing agreeable: and my Thoughts are only reasonable in this, that they never promise me any good in this Condition; I believe that I may swear to you, that the most unfortunate Man this Day in the World, is he who Honours you the most; and it were impossible that I cou'd have lived so long, had I not hoped that it would have soon dispatched me: I plainly see that I have but fifteen Days more to deplore your Absence; and that my Life and my Misfortunes can endure no longer: This Hope alone has made me suffer both, with less Impatience; and I believe you are not displeas'd at it, since all that I ought to hope, you are willing to indulge me; at least I cannot explain the last Words you
said

80 *Voiture's Familiar Letters.*

said to me, more advantageously to my self; and whatsoever way I take it, I cannot see, what better I have ever to expect: nevertheless, you, who are more discerning, and see much farther than I can, I beseech you tell me, if my Passion ought not to have an Event more fortunate than this, and what might have become of me if I had longer surviv'd it.

To Mons. de Chaudebonne.

By Thomas Cheek Esq;

Sir,

I Write to you in sight of the Coast of *Barbary*: There is but a Channel between us of about three Leagues over; tho' it is the Ocean, and the Mediterranean Sea together: You would be surprized to see a Man so far off, who takes so little Pleasure in Rambling, and who was in such hast to return to you. But the Advice I receiv'd, that this Season was very improper for Navigation, by reason of the great Calms, and that I should find it very difficult to Embark before *September*, has given me at once an Inclination, and Leisure to pursue this Voyage,

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 81

Voyage, for I chose rather to suffer the Fatigue of Travelling, than the Laziness of *Madrid*. So that after having seen at *Grenada* all that remains of the Magnificence of the *Moorish* King's *El Alhambra*, the *Zaccatin*, and that famous Place the *Vivarambla*, where I had formerly imagin'd so many Tilts and Tournaments, I am just come to the Point of *Gibraltar*: From whence, as soon as they shall have equipp'd me a Frigot, I hope to pass the *Streights*, and visit *Ceuta*, and coming back from thence, to take the Road of *Cales*, *St. Lucar*, and *Sevil*, and so to *Lisbon*. Hitherto, Sir, I have not repented of this Enterprize, which at this time of the Year has seem'd rash to all the World: *Andalusia* has reconcil'd me to all the rest of *Spain*, and having pass'd it in so many other Parts, I should be sorry not to have seen it in the only Place where it appears Beautiful. You'll think it strange, that I praise a Country, where it is never Cold, and where Sugar-canes grow: But in Recompence, I can assure you, they have such Melons, that 'twere worth coming four hundred Leagues to tast them; and that Country, for which a whole People wander'd so long in the Wilderness, could not be, in my Opinion, much more delicious than this is. I am attended here

G

by

82 *Voiture's Familiar Letters.*

by Slaves, who are handsome enough to be my Mistresses, and I may gather *Palms*, wherever I think fit, without the trouble and expence of a Victory. This Tree, for which all ancient *Greece* has fought, and is no where to be found in *France*, but in our Poets, is here no scarcer than the Olive-trees; and there is not an Inhabitant of this country who has not more of them, than all the *Cæsars*. You may behold at one View the Mountains charg'd with Snow, and Vallies cover'd with Fruit. They have Ice in *August*, and Grapes in *January*: Summer and Winter here are always mixt together, and when the Year is grown old in other Countries, and whitens all the Earth, here it is ever green with Lawrels, Orange-trees and Mirtles. I confess, Sir, I endeavour to make it seem as beautiful to you as I can; and having complained to you formerly of the Ill I have met with in *Spain*, if I do not retract what I have said, I think I am oblig'd at least, to represent to the best Advantage, whatever I find that's Good in it: In the mean time you'll wonder, that a Man, so much a Libertine as I am, should be in haste to quit all this, to go and find his Master. But I'll swear ours is such a One, that there can be no Pleasure, that ought to be preferred to the Honour and Satisfaction of Serving him. Liberty, which is esteemed the most charming

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 83

ing Thing in Nature, is not so desirable as his Highness: You know how little I am inclined to Flattery; and one of the most remarkable Qualities which distinguishes my Lord, is that he cannot suffer it. But it must be acknowledged, that besides the eminent Virtues which are owing to the Greatness of his Birth; his Affability, his good Nature, the Beauty and Vivacity of his Wit, the Pleasure he takes in hearing witty Things, and the Grace with which he speaks them himself, are Qualities which can hardly be found any where in that Eminent degree, as they appear in him; and if it were only to see something extraordinary, that I ramble about the World, what need I give my self the trouble to go so far, when I should do much better to keep near his Person. I examine every thing I see with more Curiosity than I naturally have, that when the time serves I may give a satisfactory Account to his Highness: And I am well assur'd that when I shall have once had the Honour to discourse with him about these Matters, he will know 'em ever after better than I do. The prodigious Memory of this Prince, has been a mighty Comfort to me during my Absence; for having had the Honour to be in it some time ago, I don't question but I have a place there still,

84 Voiture's *Familiar Letters*.

because I can hardly imagine, that I am so unfortunate as to be the only thing he ever forgot. His Highness, who never forgot a Tribune nor an *Ædile*, nor even a *Legionary* Soldier, who has once been named in History, will not, I believe, forget one of his humble Servants; and the whole Globe being in his Imagination better represented than in any Map, let me go never so far, I need not fear for that to go out of the Honour of his Remembrance. Nevertheless, I humbly intreat you, Sir, (you who with so much Goodness, procure me all sorts of Honours and Advantages) to find an opportunity to tell my Lord, how much I desire to have the Honour to kiss his Hand; and the Prayers I make continually for a Life of so great Consequence to all Mankind. If after this I desire any thing more of you, 'tis only that you would be pleased to take care that time shall diminish no part of what you have so liberally given me in your Affection: But see, how far the Excess of mine has carried me, that it makes me doubt the most generous Man a live. You who know, Sir, that in all those that love much, there are always some Motions that are not conformable to Reason, pardon, I beseech you, this Fear, and consider that I am excusable, being with so much Passion,

Tours, &c.

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 85

To my Lady Abbess, to thank her for
the Cat which she sent him.

By Mr. Oldys.

Madam,

I Was so perfectly yours before, that I imagin'd you ought to have believ'd there was no need of Presents to secure me to you, nor that you shou'd have contriv'd to catch me like a Rat, with a Cat. However I must needs own, that your Liberality has created in me some new Affection for you; and if there had been yet any thing in my Soul that was stragling from your Service, the Cat you sent me has caught it, and now it is intirely your own. 'Tis certainly the most beautiful and jolliest Cat that e're was seen: The greatest Beau-cat of *Spain*, is but a dirty Puss compar'd to him; and *Rominagrobis* himself, who you know, Madam, is Prince of the Cats, has no better a Mein, nor can better smell out his Interest. I can only say, that 'tis very hard to keep him in, and that of a Cat brought up in Religion, he is the most uneasie to be confin'd to a Cloyster. He can never see a Window open, but im-

86 Voiture's *Familiar Letters*.

mediately he is for jumping out of it; he had e're this leap'd twenty times over the Walls, had he not been prevented; and there is no Secular Cat in Christendom that is more a Libertine, or more head-strong than he. I am in hopes, however, that I shall perswade him to stay by the kind Entertainment I give him; for I treat him with nothing but good Cheese and *Naples-Biskets*; and perhaps (Madam) he was not so well treated by you: For I fancy the Ladies of——don't suffer their Cats to go into their Cupboards, and that the Austerity of the Convent won't afford 'em such good Chear. He begins to grow tame already; Yesterday I thought verily he had torn off one of my Hands in his wanton Addresses. 'Tis doubtless, one of the most playful Creatures in the World; there's neither Man, Woman nor Child, in my Lodging, that wears not some Mark of his Favour. But however lovely he is in his own Person, it shall always be for your sake that I esteem him; and I shall love him so well, for the Love I have for you, that I hope to give occasion to alter the Proverb, and that hereafter it shall be said, *Who Loves me, Loves my Cat*. If besides this Present you will give me the Raven that you promis'd me; and if you will
send

Voiture's Familiar Letters. 87

send me the little Dog in a Hand-basket
one of these Days, you may as proudly say
that you have given me all the sorts of
Beasts that I love, and ev'ry way oblig'd
me to be, all the Days of my Life,

Tours &c.

*A Comical Letter, out of the famous
Monsieur de Colletier, to Mada-
moiselle de Choux.*

By Sir D. Clark, Kt.

Madam,

DId you ever see an Almanack in your
Life? You'll say this is an odd Que-
stion. I'll give you the Reason then, why
I ask'd it: There's an odd sort of a Fellow
usually pictur'd in it, Madam, with the
Devil knows how many Darts in his Body.
And what of him? cry you. Why Madam,
he's only a Type of your humble Servant,
or that Son of a Whore *Cupid* has so pink'd
me all over with his confounded Arrows,
that, by my Troth, I look like—— let me
think, like what; —— like your Ladiship's
Pin-

88 *Voiture's Familiar Letters.*

Pin-cushion. But this is not all: Your Eyes had like to have proved more fatal to me than *Cupid* and all his Roguery; for, Madam, while I was Star-gazing t'other Night at your Window, full of Fire and Flame (as we Lovers use to be) I dropt plumb into your Fish-pond, by the same Token, that I hiss'd like a red-hot Horse-shoe flung into a Smith's Trough. 'Twas a hundred Pound to a Penny, but I had been drown'd, for those that came to my Assistance, left me to shift for my self, while they scrambled for boil'd Fish, that were as plentiful as Herrings at *Roterdam*. Some of my Fellow-sufferers I caught, of which I intend to make an Offering to your Ladyship, as well as of, Madam,

Your most devoted Slave,

COLLETIER

The End of the first Volume of Voiture's Letters.

Translation

Printed

TRANSLATIONS
AND
ORIGINAL
Letters.

By Mr. *T. Brown.*

Part the Second.

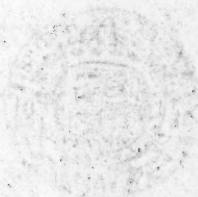


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Twelve Select
EPISTLES,
OUT OF
ARISTÆNETUS,
Epist. 2. Lib. 1.

Translated from the GREEK, by Mr. Brown.

I Was a singing to my self one of the newest Songs last Evening in the Piazza, when a very merry Adventure besel me: Two pretty young Ladies in the bloom of their Youth, and inferiour to the Graces in nothing but their Number, came up to me, and the Elder of them, with a Look that had nothing of the Air of a Coquette in it, was pleas'd to greet me after the following manner :

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2 *Aristænetus's Epistles.*

Whatever you may think of the matter, Sir, you have made two Conquests to Night by your Voice: Love has found a way to our Souls thro' our Ears; we are both subdu'd by your Harmony, and have had a long Debate with our selves, for which of us you intended this Entertainment. My own Vanity made me believe it was meant for me; my Companion here is as positive that the Compliment was designed for her. Thus not being able to decide the Controversie among our selves, which had like to have engaged us in a Civil War, we both agreed to have it determined by your self.

Why, faith, Ladies, reply'd I, to them you are both of you very Handsome; but the Duce take me if I am in love with either of you: therefore I wou'd advise you as a Friend and a Plain-dealer, not to quarrel about such an insignificant Fellow as I am, but to let all Actions of Hostility cease and live like good Neighbours together. Not but that I believe I cou'd be heartily in Love with both, or either of you at any other time, but at present my Heart is engaged else-where; and I am confident you have more Generosity and Justice than to usurp the Property of another, or to take up with the Leavings of Love.

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Oh! cry'd they, this is a downright Sham. There is not one handsome Woman in this Quarter of the Town, yet you pretend to be in Love; 'tis plain we have caught you in a Story, therefore you shall swear that you love neither of us.

I cou'd not but laugh at the Proposal: Why, Ladies, said I, every thing about me is at your Service; but I have a tender Conscience, and wou'd not willingly be perjur'd.

That is as we would have it, said one of 'em; we knew the Truth wou'd come out one way or other, therefore resolve to come along with us, for we won't lose so fair an Opportunity. With that both the Damofels fell a tugging and hawling me forward; they pluckt one way, and I pluckt another; but you know the Proverb, *Two to one is odds at Foot-ball*; so I was forc'd to submit to my Destiny, and go along with 'em whither they were pleas'd to lead me. So far the Story may be read or heard by all the World, but what follows is a Secret: In short, not to set your Mouth a Watering with a Description of every Particular, I was carried to a Room, where we made an extemporary Bed of Chairs and Stools; so ingenious is Love when it is put to its Shifts. The two good natur'd Nymphs

4 *Aristænetus's Epistles.*

were not disappointed ; and your humble
Servant went off well satisfied with his good
Fortune.

Glycera to Philinna.

Out of the same, Epist. 3. Lib. 2.

SOME ill Demon certainly ow'd me a
Spite, (by the same Token he more
than got out of my Debt) when I was
seduced to marry this dull Flegmatick Law-
yer of mine ; for I'll tell you after what a
horrid rate he uses me : Every Night, when
other Husbands, as in Duty bound, solace
their poor Wives a Bed, my Man of Law
sits up, pretending he has a Conveyance to
draw for my Lord —— and then, says he,
I'm to make a Speech in the Court to Mor-
row for my Client Sir *John* —— and if I
have it not by heart, there will be the Devil
and all to do ; with that he walks about the
Room in a meditating Posture, to make me
believe he is in earnest, mumbling I know
not what unintelligible Stuff to himself
Since he has not Affets enough, as far as I
can perceive, to discharge the Debt of Ma-
trimony, why should he marry, I wonder

Aristænctus's Epistles.

5

to inflame his Reckoning? Why shou'd a Man that doth not want a Wife to humble his Constitution, pretend to Monopolize a young Virgin to himself, especially when he wants either Will or Ability to do her Justice? Did he chuse to make me his Spouse, only to deafen me with impertinent Stories of Executions, Answers, Ejectments, and impertinent Decrees? Did he think I cou'd ever prove such a supple Slave, as to sit up all Night to hear him? Since I find he puts my Bed-chamber to no other use, than to prophane it with nasty Petty-fogging, I am resolv'd for the future to have a separate Bed by my Self: If this won't reform him, but he still continues an incorrigible Sot, drudging in other Peoples Business, and neglecting mine, I am resolv'd to give him a *Rowland* for his *Oliver*, and to speak to some more able Council to manage my Law-case. This I hope is enough to make you comprehend my Meaning: you are a sensible Woman, experienc'd in these Affairs, and therefore a Hint is sufficient. Consider then, my dear Friend, and tell me how I must play this Game. You are a Woman, and understand the Necessities of our Sex, and tho' I have not nam'd my Disease to you in down-right Terms, (for my Modesty wou'd not give me leave to

do that) yet since you know the Nature of it, I hope you'll be my Doctress, and prescribe me a Remedy. 'Tis but reasonable, I think, that you, who are my near Relation, and besides have a good Talent at Composing of Differences, shou'd stand my Friend at this Juncture: Besides, as you had a great hand in making this wicked Match, you are obliged in Honour, to make it supportable to me. But above all, it will be requisite to be very secret, for shou'd my litigious Blade come to hear that I apply my self to other Council, he might reject me for good and all, and so what I get in the Hundred, I must expect to lose in the County.

Cyrion to Dictys.

Out of the same, Epist. 7. Lib. 1.

Distracted between Joy and Grief, I write the following Lines to you: Yesterday I was at my old Recreation of Fishing by the Sea-side, and as I was drawing a thundring Fish out of the Water, so very large that it made my Rod crack again, behold there comes to up me a pretty

Da-

Damofel, with a lovely mixture of Roses and Lilies in her Cheeks, tall and straight as a Cedar that likes the Ground it grows in. Thought I to my self, I'm a lucky Dog to Day, Fortune favours me in both Elements, and now I am like to get a better Prize at Land than I drew just now out of the Water: Honest Friend, cries she, I conjure you by *Neptune*, to look after my Cloaths a little, while I wash my self in the Sea. This Request, you may imagine, was not unwelcome to me, because it wou'd give me an Opportunity to see something. She had no sooner thrown off her Rigging; but, good Heavens! there was a sight enough to have spoiled the most Virtuous Resolutions of the severest Philosopher: From between her Hair, which was of a lovely Black, and flow'd down her Shoulders in great Quantity, I discover'd a pair of Rosie Cheeks, and an Ivory Neck, that wholly possess'd me with Admiration and Surprise: both these Colours were in the highest perfection, but they deriv'd no little agreement from the neighbourhood of the Black. To return to our Nymph, she had no sooner undress'd, but she plung'd foremost into the Waves. The Sea was as smooth as a Bowling-green, and when she appeared above the Water, had I not seen her before, I durst have sworn she

she had been one of the *Nereids*, of whom the Poets tell us so many Stories. When she had washed as long as she thought fit, out she came; and from such a sight as this, our Painters, I suppose, were instructed how to draw *Venus* rising out of the Sea. I immediately ran to my lovely Damofel to deliver her her Cloaths, and when she was so near me, cou'd not forbear to touch her Bubbies, and so forth. But to see what ill Fate attends me! The young Gipsie blush'd and frown'd at me: But even her very Anger became her; it gave a fresh Lustre to her Beauty, and her Eyes darted Lightning at me. Then in her Indignation she broke my Rod, flung my Fish into the Sea, and ran away from me, as fast as her Legs would carry her. Imagine in what a Confusion she left me. I lamented the loss of what I had taken with so much Pains; but the loss of her, whom I had as it were in my Hands, afflicted me infinitely more. This Disappointment, in short, so mortifies me, that I dare no longer trust my self with the cruel Idea of it.

Phi-

Philochorus to Polyænus.

Out of the same, Epist. 4. Lib. 1.

LAst Week *Hippias* and I were taking a turn in the Park, when on a sudden he thus accosted me: Friend, says he, prithee mind that Lady yonder that leans upon her Maid's Arm. How tall! how straight! how well-featur'd she is! By Heavens, She's a Miracle of a Woman: Let us e'en cross the Walk and accost her. Why, replied I to him, you're mad I think: Unless I am mistaken in her Outside, she's a Woman of Vertue, and consequently no Game for such as you and I: But if you resolve to proceed, let us view her a little more distinctly before we board her, for I love to look about me before I leap. My Companion fell a Laughing, as if he had been distracted, and striking me gently on the Shoulder, Thou'rt a Novice, said he, I find in these Affairs. Take it from me, all the Women in the World are made of sinful Materials. One may have more Hypocrisie than another, but if you put it home to her, I'll engage you'll find her made of true Flesh and Blood. But alas, you are a perfect
Stranger

Stranger to the Town-intrigues, otherwise how cou'd you imagine that any Woman of Honour wou'd be walking here at this time of the Day, and dart her Glances so artfully on all she meets? Prithee observe how she plays with her Necklace, how slyly she steals her pretty Hand out of her Glove; and as if she went to reform some Disorder in her Dress, how dexterously she discovers her Breasts? From these and a thousand other Indications I conclude that this Lady won't let a Man sigh at her Feet in vain: but what is more convincing, I now tipt the Wink at her, and she as kindly return'd it; therefore let us go and board the Vessel, for I dare ingage she'll make no Resistance. He had no sooner spoke these Words, but he makes directly to the Prize above mentioned, and finding a fit Opportunity, he thus made his Addresses to her: I swear by your Beauty, the most sacred Oath to me that can be, you have made your self in a Moment the absolute Sovereign of my Heart; and if you please to order that Eves-dropping Maid of yours, to retire to some distance, I have something to communicate to you, which perhaps you will not be displeas'd to hear. She accordingly commanded her Attendant to file off, when the other in this manner pursued

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Aristænetus's *Epistles*. II

his Discourse, As I know that Love is no Camelion to live upon Air, I am not so unreasonable as to demand any Favours of you *gratis*: And, on the other hand, Madam, I am sure you are too conscientious to put too high a Price on 'em. Gold, you know, may be too dearly bought; but I hope you'll comply with the running Market-Price; I have Madam, two things to plead for me, Vigour and Wealth, but I wou'd by my good Will husband both of 'em so, as to make 'em hold out: Come give me your Answer. The Lady's Eyes sufficiently declar'd the Consent of her Heart; she stood still and blush'd, and such a beautiful Red streak'd her Cheeks, as we find in the Heavens when the Sun is just a setting. When my Friend found the Bargain was now as good as struck, he turn'd about to me; And what do you think now of my Skill in these Affairs? you would have dissuaded me forsooth, from this Expedition, but now you see how I have succeeded; for, at the expence of a few Words and a little Time I have brought the Nymph to surrender. You alas! are such a Heretick, as to believe there are Women in the World above Flattery, Corruption and Bribery, but you are in a damn'd Mistake; follow me, and I'll show you some Sport: but in the mean
time

12 *Aristænetus's Epistles.*

time take this for granted, That there is no Garrison so strong, and no Woman so obstinately vertuous, but by one Practice or other, both may be brought to take a new Master.

Lamprias to Philippides.

Out of the same, Epist. 16. Lib. 1.

YOU remember me troubl'd with all the Symptoms of Love, and desire to know how I got cur'd of it; I us'd to entertain my Passion in the Fields and solitary Groves, which instead of abating, grew every Day fiercer, and raged more violently in my Breast. As I walk'd by the purling Streams, May *Cupid*, said I, and his Mother, (for they, and only they, know what Torments I languish under) give me Courage enough to make a Declaration of my Passion, which hitherto I have stiff'd with in me. As Love has transfixt with his Darts this tender Breast of mine, so I hope he will in the same manner, treat the fair Insensible, who has given me so many cruel Inquietudes. One Day it happened that after
I had

I had amused my self with these Contemplations in the Woods, I found I had Resolution enough to venture an Interview with my Mistress. I went accordingly to her House, and had a long Conversation with her, wherein I found the Beauties of her Mind, to be not at all inferior to those of her Face: Her Looks wore all the bewitching Marks of the most agreeable Innocence; I admir'd her Hand, the whitest and softest in the World: I viewed with sacred Horror, those killing Eyes, that penetrate quicker and deeper than Lightning. To compleat my Ruin, she shew'd me a delicious pair of Breasts as it were by accident, on which the God of love himself, wou'd be proud to recline his Head. All this while my Tongue was tied with a religious Awe, and I had not Assurance enough to acquaint her with my Pain. However, I was very intent on my mental Devotion, and pray'd to *Cupid*, that since he knew my Imbecillity so well (which I wholly imputed to himself) he would so effectually touch my Mistress's Heart that she of her own accord, should own her Affection for me. I had no sooner concluded these pious Ejaculations, but I found the God had heard my Prayers; for my Mistress, who look'd so Coy and Demure at my

my first coming into the Room, on the sudden, smiled very graciously upon me, and gently squeez'd me by the Hand; and then no longer able to conceal the Vehemence of her Desires, she imprest so warm a Kiss on my Lips, that I was in good hopes, the Seal wou'd never have parted from the Wax: All the Sweets of *Arabia the Happy*, all the fragrant Odours of the Eastern World, all the blooming Beauties of the Spring, and the Wealth of Summer: In short, all the Incense that is offer'd on the Altars of our Gods, comes infinitely short of the natural Sweetness of her Breath. But here I will stop my Narration, for what need I trouble my self to send every Particular to you, who are old enough to imagine 'em of your self. Only this I will add, That we strove all Night long, which of us should express their Love in the most Emphatical Manner; and that, that sawcy Intruder, sleep found us too well employ'd to offer to interrupt us.

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Philomatia to Eumusus.

Out of the same, Epist. 14. Lib. 1.

THIS comes to let you know that we are not so bewitched to Musick as you imagine, and that the best Lute and Guitarre in the World will make but little Progress, unless it comes attended with the more powerful Harmony of Money. Why then do you give your self and me the unnecessary trouble of so many Serenades? Why must you imploy your Hands to shew the Passion of your Heart? Why do you persecute me with your Sonnets, and sing under my Windows?

*Since Beauty's Charms do hourly fade,
And 'tis a Shame to be a Maid;
Let not Love's Pleasures be delay'd.*

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You are old enough, one wou'd think, to know that Money atones for all Defects with us Women, and that Beauty and Vigour have no Merit with us, if they have no Gold to recommend 'em: But you think me an easy, foolish, good-natur'd Creature, who am to be imposed on by any wheedling Stories. You fancy'd, I sup-

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pose,

pose, that I never had been initiated in the Mysteries of our Profession, and that I wou'd immediately surrender to you, upon the first stroak of your Violin, and the first touch of the Lute; but to undeceive you, know that I was bred up under the most experienc'd Mistress of her time; who formed my tender Mind with wholsom Precepts; telling me, that nothing under the Sun was sincere or desirable but Money; and teaching me to despise every thing but that. Under her Instructions, and by her virtuous Example, I have profited so much, that I now measure Love, not by vain empty Compliments, that signify nothing, but by the Presents that are made me, and by the Almighty Rhetorick of Gold, which will stand my Friend, when a thousand such fluttering Weather-cocks as you have left me in the Lurch.

Terpsion to Polycles.

Out of the same, Epist. 7. Lib. 2.

TO convince you how insensibly Love gets Admission into the most innocent Hearts, be pleased to read over the following

following Story: A young Country Girl, fell desperately in Love with her Mistress's Gallant, and took Fire herself; while she contributed to extinguish that of others. Being obliged to keep Watch upon the Stairs, lest the Lovers shou'd be surpriz'd, she cou'd not but often hear their Murmuring and Sighing: She saw 'em too folded in one anothers Embraces, performing the Ceremony of Love; and thus through the Eyes and Ears of this tender Girl, the God of Love, with his Torch and Arrows plung'd himself over Head and Ears in her panting Breast. She bewailed the Unhappiness of her Condition, and accus'd her Destiny for giving her a Mind susceptible of the most tender Impressions, yet, denying her the Means to satisfy them: Why shou'd not I, said she, participate Pleasure with my Mistress, since I have a Soul as sensible as hers? Why shou'd Love, that tramples over all Distinctions of Rank and Quality, shew himself faint hearted only in my Quarrel? But she did not long afflict herself with these unprofitable Complaints. *Venus* wou'd not suffer her to lose the Time in lazy Wishes, for being sent one Afternoon to invite the Gallant to her Mistress's Lodgings, without any farther Preamble or Preface,

face, she accosted him in this manner: Sir, said she, *I believe you to be a Gentleman, and willing to ease the Longing of a young Virgin: If my Face will go down with you, that, and the rest of my Body are at your Service. You know well enough what it is to Love, and therefore will have Compassion, I hope, on one that languishes under that Distemper.* The Gentleman without farther ado, took her at her word, and was so courteous as to play the Priest, since she was so willing to be the Sacrifice. He soon eased her of that Burden she complain'd of, and own'd that he ne'er received more pleasure in his Life. The Kisses of married Women are generally insipid; the Kisses of mercenary Harlots are fallacious and deceitful; but those of an innocent, uninstructed Virgin are sincere, and consequently the most delicious. Our Lovers had like to have fainted away under the Violence of their Agitation; their Souls kept hovering about their Mouths, but their uninterrupted Kisses denied them a Passage: While the golden Minutes pass'd away in these Transports, the Mistress, who was seized with a Fit of Jealousy to see them stay so long, stole softly into the Room, and surprized them in very criminal Circumstances. The unhappy Maid found the first Effects
of

of her Indignation, whom she thump'd and beat, and dragg'd by the Hair, but the poor Wench intreated her to consider, that tho' her ill Stars had sent her a Slave into the World, which was none of her Fault, she had as strong Inclinations as the best of her Sex: that Love was an Imperious Deity; and when he had once got Entrance into a Heart, wou'd not throw up his Possession, as she her self cou'd not but know by Experience. Wherefore, Madam, says she, in consideration of Love, who is our common Master, and whose Yoak both of us carry, be pleas'd to forgive this Indiscretion in me: which, after the worst Gloss you can put upon it, was only the Effect of a foolish Curiosity, from which the best of Women are not exempt. These Complaints so innocently deliver'd, soon appeas'd her Mistress's Fury, who, taking her Gallant by the Hand, thus rallied him; *I find, crys she, you are of the Humour of some People, who had rather gather sour Grapes, than stay till they are Ripe. What cou'd make you so foolishly trifle your time with a silly raw Baggage, that is so far from knowing how to perform her part in the Chorus of Love, that she does not yet understand how to level her Kisses aright. A Virgin is dull and heavy, and unacquainted with the true Ma-*
B b 3 *nagement*

nagement of a Passion; whereas such a Woman, as I am, that has tried many a Fall with many a Man in her time, needs not the Instructions of any one, but gives the utmost Satisfaction: In short, a Woman gives, but a Virgin only receives Kisses, which makes a sensible Difference between them; And this, continued she to her Spark, you know well enough; but, if you want to have your Memory refresh'd, come to me to Night, and I will make you own I am in the right.

What happen'd upon this, I can't tell, neither am I curious to know, because all Men affect to Govern themselves by their own peculiar Palates, but especially in the Business of Love.

A Letter of Gallantry, from a young Gentleman, to his Perjured Mistress.

Out of the same, Epist. 9. Lib. 2.

IF you consider, Madam, what ill Treatment I have had from your Hands, you are in the right on't to believe that I hate you most mortally; but then if you reflect
what

what an absolute Empire your Beauty has gain'd over my Soul, you can't but be sensible that it is impossible for me to harbour the least injurious Thought of you. To convince you how far I interest my self in every thing that concerns you, I swear to you by that adorable Face, which hath made so perfect a Conquest of me, That next to the Grief of losing you, I am in the next place concern'd to think what Punishments Heaven has in store for you, for affronting it by so open, so bare-fac'd a Perjury. Love has so effectually stiff'd all Resentments within me, that I dare not entertain the least disadvantageous Wishes against you. But tho' I am ready to forgive you, I am afraid least the Powers above shou'd call you to an account for violating their Majesty by a Crime so provoking. If the thing wholly depended on me, you might safely stare Heaven in the Face, after you have so often called down its Vengeance on your Head; but my Fear is, (and my Concern for you, obliges me to tell you so much) that the Gods will not be so ready to pardon you, as I have been; and any Misfortune of yours wou'd afflict me more, than to find my self neglected and forgotten by you. I impute my Miseries to Destiny, not to you, (you see

Madam,

Madam, I would rather judge injuriously of Heaven than of your self) and I will never cease to pray, that Justice it self may be blind, that so you may escape the Punishment you deserve, rather than those bright Eyes should suffer any thing, tho' they have caus'd my Ruin. Nay; if it should be your chance to trespass once more, and offend Heaven again, I hope it will have a due Regard to the Weakness of your Youth. I am content to sacrifice my Pretensions to you; I, who wou'd sooner part with the *Indies* than your self, provided that you be no Sufferer. Farewel charming Creature, farewell; and may Fate be as indulgent to you, as I have been: Show me now if you can, a Lover like me, who after such cruel Usage ever writ so humble a Letter.

Abrocomas to his dear Delphis.

Out of the same, Epist. 21. Lib. 2.

You'll be angry perhaps at the frank Confession, I am going to make to you. I examine with curious Eyes all the Women

Women I see, I go to all the places of publick Resort, and no Female escapes me; pray, Madam, don't think I do this to carry on any Intrigue with 'em (for I wou'd not have you put so unjust a Construction upon my Expressions) 'tis only to see how much your Beauty surpasses theirs, and to be able to do the more Justice to your Merits. Yes, Madam, by *Cupid* I swear it, who never had a devouter Votary than my self, you surpass the rest of your Sex in Dress, Beauty, and all other Agreements: Your Charms are so conspicuous and shining, that they need no Artifice to set em off: a natural Red adorns your Cheeks; neither do you lye under any necessity to load your Head with that cumbersome Attire, other Women take a Pride in. You have the loveliest Hair in the Universe; Who can behold so black a pair of Eyebrows, in so fair and white a Forehead, and not own himself your Slave? I dare not trust my Invention, as fertile as it is, with venturing upon more Particulars. In short, Madam, all the Perfections of your Sex center in you; and your Empire is never so safe, as when you appear amongst our most celebrated Beauties. Your sight alone, as it creates our Astonishment, so it commands our Love; and to make a new Triumph,

24 *Aristænetus's Epistles.*

umph, you need only appear to a new Beholder. Since my Life is intirely wrapt up in yours, I wish you may live long and happy. All my Inclinations, all my Hopes and Thoughts terminate in you; and I earnestly beg of Heaven, that I may always continue in this Opinion. Enjoy that Conquest therefore which Nature has given you, and I will everlastingly carry Love's Golden Dart in my Breast. Neither do you endeavour to pluck it out, for besides that, you are not able to do it, I don't desire to part with it, for I take pleasure in nothing so much as in my Passion. May it always be the Scope of my whole Life to love *Delphis*, and may it be my Fate to be beloved by her, to be subdued by her Beauty, and charm'd by her Conversation.

Oceanus to Aristobulus.

Out of the same, Epist. 20. Lib. 2.

YOU desire to know what Progress our Friend *Damon* has made in the Affections of his Mistress, whom he hath so long

long besieg'd, and I am sorry I cannot send you so good News as I cou'd wish: He threw himself down at her Feet, and in the common strain of Lovers; will you not, says he, take compassion on my Youth? Will you not pity one that dies every Moment for you? Show at least some Tenderness to the Man, who never was conquer'd by any Beauty but yours? But she return'd him a Compliment, as cold as if it had come out of the midst of *Tartary*: Leave persecuting me, says she, with idle Stories of your Passion, with your pretended Darts, and your Romantick Flames, for you do but lose your Time and Labour. The Youth was reduc'd to the last Despair, when he found himself thus slighted, and as Anger on these Occasions generally succeeds to Love, he said the most reproachful bitter things to her, that his Indignation cou'd inspire him with. When his Fury had spent it self, looking upon him with a scornful Air, I know, says she, how to punish the Insolences of your Tongue: All your Sex are perfidious and false; You devour us, nay, you devour one another. The most savage Beasts in the Woods, unless compell'd by Hunger, seldom attack the Travellers, but when they are taken by you, and have been debauch'd with a Domestic

Domestic Education, they prove erranter Brutes than any in the Forest; to be short with you, your Perjury and Inconstance teach us to lay aside all pity, and treat you as you deserve: for in the first Ardors of your Love, you can lie all Night at our Thresholds on the bare Ground; you can say the most submissive things in the World; you can whine and cry, and make Goddesses of us; you have Oaths perpetually at command, and with those Counters you deceive us; but no sooner have we granted the last Favours to you, but you grow insolent and haughty; you make us the Subject of your ill-manner'd Mirth, and you disdainfully reject her, whom the day before you adored like a Divinity. You are all Atheists as to Love, and pretend that *Jupiter* has other Business on his Hands, than to trouble himself about the Oaths of Lovers.

Thus the Lady discarded the unfortunate *Lyco*; and, as partial as I am to my Friend, I cannot but own there is a great deal of Truth in her Invective.

Chry-

Chrysis to Myrina.

Out of the same, Epist. 15. Lib. 11.

YOU and I, my dearest *Myrina*, have long languish'd under the Tyranny of *Cupid*, who is the most Fantastical of all the Deities. You are in Love with my Husband, and 'tis my unhappy Destiny, (But who can resist the God who commands all the rest?) to doat on your Page. What Expedient will Love, who uses to be no Block-head when he is put to his shifts, what Expedient, I say, will Love find out to put an end to our present Sufferings? You know I am a constant Woman at Prayers, and if a Woman ever prays for any thing in good earnest, you likewise know, 'tis when she prays for a kind Gallant. Now to be plain with you, I put up a fervent Petition to Heaven this Morning, that it wou'd furnish a Remedy for both our Passions; when immediately the following Thought came into my Head: I won't be positive, as our Priests generally are, that this Whimsie of mine is of Heaven's inspiring; but it seems so easie, so pretty, and so feasible, that I am resolv'd with your help to see it put in Execution.

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The Stratagem in short is this: Do you pretend to be very angry with your Page, upon what Occasion you think most proper, whether for tearing your Fan, beating your Squirrel, or so forth, but be sure to turn him out of your House. The better to colour this Business, I will give you leave to strike him a Blow or two, but I article before-hand with you, that you sha'n't hurt him. Upon this I know he will immediately run to me, as being your greatest Acquaintance, and I will take care to dispatch my Husband on an Errand to you, under pretence of interceding for the Boy, that you wou'd be so kind as to take him into your Service again. By this Means both of us will have a fair Opportunity to satisfy our Longings, which, for my part, I will see punctually perform'd, unless your Page is a very ignorant Devil indeed; and I suppose you will not be wanting to your self. But, my dear *Myrina*, remember to keep my Husband with you as long as you can, for that you know will be for our mutual Interest. I can tell you before-hand, that you will not be disappointed in my Spark; I that have so often experienc'd how well he performs upon Duty, am satisfi'd he'll out-do a Heroe, when Wickedness spurs him on. *Farewel.*

Ste

Stefichorus to Eratosthenes.

Out of the same, Epist. 9. Lib. 1.

TO see now what cunning Gipsies these Women are! T'other Day a certain Woman of my Acquaintance, walking in the Market-place with her Husband by her side, and a Train of Servants at her heels, saw a Gallant of hers at some distance off, with whom she used to be familiar. She had a mighty longing to whisper something in his Ear, and if possible to steal a Kiss from him before her Husband's Face; so to bring the matter about, she pretends to fall upon her Knee, and her Gallant, who as it seem'd, understood her Design, charitably lent her his Hand to help her up: Then down she tumbles again, and our Gentleman was forced the second time to give her his Assistance. Oh! my poor wife, cries the Cuckold, in a strange Consternation, I hope thou hast not hurt thy self. Troubled with such cruel Fits, cry'd she; and then she made the third Stumble. The Gallant on one side, and the Husband on the other did what in 'em lay to set her on her Legs again, but as her Fits still increast, the Husband, with the help of the kind Gentleman, was obliged to carry her
to

to the next Tavern: The Gallant chafed her Hand, and rubb'd her Face; and all the while the Fellow thank'd him for the great Pains he took with his Wife: but finding her Indisposition still increase, he ran down Stairs like Lightning to fetch a Physician of his Acquaintance to her, not daring to trust his Servants with so important a Message. In the mean time, our Lovers were not wanting to administer mutual Consolation to each other: So by that time the Husband came back with his Doctor, his Wife was exceedingly refreshed. The Gallant was complimented a thousand times for his Civilities on this Occasion: Sir, says the Man, I heartily beg your Pardon for the Trouble my Wife has given you. Lord, Sir, answer'd he, if it was to do ten times again, it would be no trouble. But indeed 'twas too much, Sir. I'faith, cries the other, I don't think I can ever do too much for her. I swear but you have, says the Husband, I find she hath put you into a Sweat with helping her. In short they drank a loving Glas together; the Wife pretended she was twenty *per Cent.* better than when she set out in the Morning, the Gallant was highly satisfy'd with what he had done, and the Husband the merriest Man alive, to see his Wife so miraculously recover'd.

The End of Aristænetus's Epistles.

Some Select
L E T T E R S
 O U T O F
P L I N Y, Junior.

By the same Hand.

I Am to inform the Reader, that in the following Letters, I have not confined my self to a literal Version. Where I found any place so perplexed that no certain Sence cou'd be made of it, or where it cou'd not be understood without a Comment, (which wou'd have looked ridiculous in such a Collection as this.) I have fairly omitted it, and sometimes I have made bold to alter a Word or two to make my Author more palatable to the English Reader. As for the Choice I have made of the Letters, if they are not the best I hope they will not Displease.

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To

To his Friend Romanus.

Lib. 3. Epist. 13.

AT your Request, I have sent you the *Panegyric* I lately deliver'd before our most incomparable * *Prince*, altho' I had sent it to you, whether you had desired it or no. Now you have it before you, I must beg you to reflect upon the Difficulty, as well as the Nobleness of the Subject. Upon other Occasions, the Newness of the Argument generally draws our Attention, but here it was impossible for me to say any thing which all the World did not know before. for which Reason, the Reader, having nothing else to employ him, will only mind the Elocution, in which 'tis a hard matter for a man to succeed well, when that, and only that, is taken notice of. I cou'd wish that the Order, Transitions, and Figures cou'd be consider'd at the same time: for in the most Barbarous Nations, you shall find many that are able to invent handsomely, and to express themselves magnificently enough; whereas to dispose of things in their proper Order, and to vary the Figures with Art and Judgment, is only the Talent

Select Letters out of Pliny. 33

Talent of the Learned. I am of Opinion indeed, that the sublime and pompous Stile is not alway to be used; for as in a Picture nothing sets off the Light so well as an artful Disposition of the Shades, so an Oration is no less recommended by the Simplicity than Majesty of the Diction. But why should I trouble you with these things, who know them so much better than my self? In the mean time I beg the favour of you, to mark what places you think want Correction; for I shall be the easier inclin'd to believe that the rest of the Oration pleases you, when I find you dislike some Passages in it. *Faremel.*

To his Dear Caninius.

Lib. 8. Epist. 4.

I Was the noblest thing you ever attempted in your Life, to relate the *Dacian* War in Verse: For, besides the newness of the Subject, what can be more Copious and Fertile, what more Poetical, and, though we all know it to be true, what more seemingly Fabulous? You will have a noble Occasion to employ all the Stores of

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your

34 *Select Letters out of Pliny.*

your Invention: when you talk of Rivers commanded to take a new Course, or bridled by new Bridges, that before were hardly to be pass'd in Boats; when you talk of Armies encamp'd on the tops of Precipices, and a mighty King who had grasped the whole Universe in his Imagination, not only deprived of his Kingdom but his Life: In short, when you come to describe two magnificent Triumphs, both of which were celebrated for the Reduction of a Nation held Invincible before: The only and greatest Difficulty will be, to express all this in a Strain equal to the Dignity of the Subject; which even you, my Friend, well find to be no easy Task, altho' you have a towering, elevated Genius, capable of the highest undertakings. Some little Trouble too you'll find it, to soften the Names of these Barbarous People, and particularly of their Towns, so as they shall not shock our Ears, when they come into Verse; but there is nothing so harsh and dissonant but what may be made harmonious, or at least tolerable with a little Care and Alteration. Besides, if it were lawful for *Homer* to contract, to extend, and turn Words, even of *Grecian* Extraction, for the better Cadence of his Verse, why shou'd not the same Privilege be allow'd you, especially since it is not affected

but

Select Letters out of Pliny. 35

but necessary? Therefore, when after the Custom of the Poets, you have invoked the Help of the Muses, and especially of your Heroe, their greatest Patron, whose noble Atchievements and Actions you are going to Sing, weigh Anchor, put up all your Sails, and, if ever you did it upon any Occasion, so now more particularly hoist your Flag, display your Colours, and bear down with all the Force of Wit. These Metaphors perhaps may seem too daring for Prose; but why may I not be indulg'd to speak in the Poetical Language to a Poet? But this I bargain with you before hand, that you shall send me your Poem in pieces just as you finish it: Nay, even before you have finish'd it, by which means it will come the more fresh, like Fruit newly gather'd from the Tree. You will tell me 'tis impossible that small Fragments shou'd please so well as an entire Work, or that a Sketch should be so well liked as a finish'd Picture: I confess it, and therefore I will consider it as such, and you shall bestow the last hand upon it at your leisure in my Library. To your other Favours give me, I beseech you, this farther Mark of your Friendship, as to communicate to me what you wou'd let no body else see: For tho' I shall the more commend and value your

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Writings, as I see them come out more slowly and more correct, yet I shall both Love and Honour your self infinitely the more, as you send me these things with most dispatch, in their Undress.

To his Wife Calphurnia.

Lib. 6. Epist. 7.

YOU send me word, that my Absence does not a little afflict you, and that you have no other Antidote against your Melancholy but my Letters: 'Tis no small Satisfaction to me, that I am always in your Thoughts, and that such Trifles can contribute to your Diversion. For my part, to let you see my Case is parallel with yours, I am perpetually reading yours, and the oftner I read them, the more new they seem to me, and I still discover some fresh Beauties in 'em, which I did not observe before. Tho' this in some measure alleviates my Pain, yet it sets me a longing the more for your Company; for if your Letters are so sweet and entertaining, what Pleasures may I not expect from your Conversation? Therefore let me conjure you to lose

no

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no Opportunities of Writing to me, tho', as I hinted before, at the same time this Commerce delights me, it gives me some Uneasiness.

To the Same.

Lib. 7. Epist. 5.

TIs impossible for me to tell you how much I regret the want of your good Company, and I have several good Reasons for it: In the first place, there is Love in the case. Then 'tis to be consider'd that you and I never lived asunder, which is the reason why I pass the greatest part of the Night in thinking on you. From the same Cause it proceeds, that even in the Day-time, at those Hours when I used to visit you in your Chamber, my Feet of their own accord carry me thither, and then when I miss you, I come back no less melancholy and sorrowful, than if you had turn'd me out of your Room. The only time that I am free from these Inquietudes, is when I am pleading in the *Forum*, and drudging for my Friends. Judge then, what a mortified Life I lead, when I am

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forced to find Relaxation in Labour, and
Comfort in Care and Misery.

To his Friend Ferox.

Lib. 7. Epist. 13.

YOur last Letter is a convincing Argument that you Study, and that you don't. You'll tell me I talk Riddles to you, and so I do, till I explain to you more distinctly what my Meaning is. In short, the Letter you sent me, shows you did not study for it, so easie and negligent it appears to be; and yet at the same time 'tis so polite, that 'tis impossible that any one should write it, who did not weigh every word; or else you are certainly the happiest Man in the World, if you can write Letters so just and exact, without Care and Premeditation.

To Cornelius Tacitus.

Lib. 7. Epist. 20.

I Return you your Book which I read over very carefully, having marked all along in the Margin what places I thought fit to be alter'd, and what struck out; For I am no less inclin'd to tell the Truth, than you are to hear it. 'Tis a plain Case I believe, that no Man suffers himself to be so patiently found fault with, as he that deserves the highest Commendation. And now I expect my own Book from you with your Corrections and Amendments. These reciprocal Offices of Friendship that pass between us give me no little Satisfaction; for if Posterity will have any Concern for us, I am pleas'd to think that it will tell, with what Amity, and Integrity, you and I have lived together. It will be a remarkable, and perhaps the only Instance in History, that two Men almost of the same Age and Quality, and of some Reputation for Learning, (I am oblig'd to speak the more sparingly of you, because at the same time I speak of my self) should promote one another's Studies so unanimously.

When

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When I was but young, and you had justly acquir'd a high Character in the World, even then it was my greatest Ambition to imitate and follow you, tho' at never so great a Distance. We had then at *Rome* several Persons of Wit and Learning, that were deservedly admired; yet so great a Similitude was there between our Tempers and Dispositions, that even then I endeavoured to Copy after you. For this Reason 'tis no small Satisfaction to me, that whenever there is any Discourse about Learning and Learned Men, you and I are still quoted together; that when your Name is mention'd, the Company immediately mentions mine; and that when they prefer a third Man to one of us, they mean it of both. But 'tis no matter to me, whether you or I are mention'd first, for if, I am first, it is only because I am the next to you. I don't question too, but you have observ'd, that in the last Wills of the Deceas'd, unless there was some particular Difference in the Case, you and I have Legacies of the same Value generally bequeathed us. The Conclusion I draw from all this is, That we have the greatest Obligations that can be, to entertain the strictest Amity; since even our Studies, our Manners, our Reputations; in short, the united Testimony of the
World

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World are so many Arguments why the mutual Friendship between us shou'd still increase. *Farewel.*

To the same.

Lib. 6. Epist. 16.

YOU desire me to send you an Account of my Uncle's Death, that you may be the better able to relate it in your History. I am obliged to you for this Favour, for I foresee my Uncle's Name will be immortal, if it has the Honour to be preserv'd by your Pen: Tho' it was his Fate to die, like great Cities memorable for their Calamities, in the Universal Desolation of the finest Part of *Italy*; Nay, tho' he himself has written several learned Volumes, which will propagate his Memory to future Ages, yet that Eternity which seems to be intail'd on every thing you write, will not a little contribute to perpetuate his Name: For my part I reckon those Men happy, who by a particular Indulgence of Heaven are capable of doing things fit to be transmitted to Posterity, or of writing Works, that deserve to be read; but I reckon those the happiest

42 *Select Letters out of Pliny.*

piest of all, who possess both these Advantages: Amongst the Number of these Latter I reckon my Uncle, by means of yours, as well as his own Writings, upon which account I am proud to comply with your Desires. My Uncle was then at *Misenus*, with the Fleet under his Command in the Harbour, on the 24th Day of *August*, about one of the Clock in the Afternoon; when my Mother came to tell him, that she beheld afar off a Cloud of an unusual Magnitude and Form. He had taken two or three turns in the Sun, after which he bathed himself in cold water, then he lay down and tasted a small repast, and fell to his Books; but upon this alarm called for his Slippers, and got up to the highest part of the House, from whence he might most advantageously behold this Prodigy. At so great a Distance we cou'd not positively tell from whence this Cloud arose, tho' afterwards we knew it came from Mount *Vesuvius*: Nothing resembl'd the Shape on't more than a Pine-tree does, for from a long taper Trunk, it spread it self to a very large Head, the Reason of which I suppose might be, that when the Wind that carried it up, began to fail, its own weight made it run out into a great breadth. Sometimes it look'd of a whitish, and sometimes of

Select Letters out of Pliny. 43

of a black gloomy Colour, according as it carried up with it Earth, or Ashes. My Uncle thinking it impossible to make a just Observation of this Phænomenon without coming nearer, commanded a Gally to be got ready, and made an offer to take me along with him, if I thought convenient. I excused my self to him, and answer'd, that I wou'd pass that Afternoon at my Study; and as it happen'd he had given me something to transcribe. As he was going out of the House with his Pocket-book in his Hand, the Seamen of *Retina* affrighted at so surprizing a Conflagration (for the Village lay under the Mountain, and there was no other way of escaping but by Sea) begged of him not to expose himself to a Danger that so imminently threatned him. This did not dissuade him from his Design, and what he began out of a Spirit of Curiosity, he perform'd with the greatest Resolution imaginable. So he ordered the Gally to put out to Sea, and went himself aboard it, with an Intention to assist not only those of *Retina*, but the Neighbouring Towns, for the Country all along that Shore is extremely well peopled: he steer'd his Course towards those places, from whence the affrighted Inhabitants ran away in great Multitudes; nay, he sail'd
into

44 *Select Letters out of Pliny.*

into the very Mouth of danger, and was so free from Fear, that he took particular notice of every Circumstance almost, relating to this Eruption. By this time a shower of Ashes, attended with Pumice stones, covered the Deck, falling the hotter, and in greater Quantities, as they approach'd nearer to the Shore. Upon this he consider'd a little with himself whether he had not best tack about, and Sail home-wards (which the Pilate advised him to do) but he told him that Fortune favoured the bold, and so ordered him to Sail to his friend *Pomponianus*, who was at *Stabie*, on the other side of the Bay. In this place, tho' the danger seem'd to be at some Distance, yet upon the first approach of it, *Pomponianus* had order'd all his Luggage to be carried on Ship-board, being resolv'd to make his Escape, had not the Wind sat in the contrary Corner. But the same Wind that hindered him, brought my Uncle into the Harbour, who perswaded them to be of good Courage, and endeavour'd by his own example to make them lay aside their fears. After this he bathed, and was very cheerful at Supper, or (what in these Dangers is full as great) he seem'd at least to be so. All this while the Flames broke out in several places of the Mountain

tain *Vesuvius*, which appear'd so much the brighter in so dark a Night: In this strange Consternation the Country People left their Habitations, which in their Absence were devour'd by the Flames, and this my Uncle urged as an Argument, why it was not adviseable to quit the place where they were. After this he compos'd himself to rest: and slept very soundly, as those which were in the next Room and heard him, affirmed, for by reason of the largeness of his Chest, he breathed somewhat of the loudest. But the Court-yard, thro' which there was a Passage to the Dining-room, was by this time so cover'd with Ashes and Pumice-stones, that there was no getting out of it for him, if he staid never so little longer; so being awaked out of his sleep, he joyn'd *Pomponianus* and his Company, who had watched all this while. And now they debated among themselves, whether they shou'd stay within doors, or venture abroad in the open Air, for the Earth-quake was so violent, and the Houses reel'd and stagger'd so, that one wou'd have thought they had been torn up from their very Foundations. When they were now in the Fields, they feared the falling of the Pumice-stones, tho' they were light and porous, however of the two Dangers, this

46 *Select Letters out of Pliny.*

this was the least. With my Uncle, Reason overcame Reason, with the rest, one Fear overcame another, so they carried Pillows on their Heads to break the fall of any thing that might fall on 'em. In other places it was Day, but here it was as dark as possibly Night it self cou'd be, tho' it was somewhat lessened by the numerous Flambeaux and other Lights. Then it was resolved to go to the Sea-shore, and see how the Sea stood affected, which still continued very Rough and Tempestuous. Here my Uncle, lying along upon a bundle of Cloaths, called once or twice for cold Water, and drank it off. After this the Flames, and a smell of Brimstone, which used to precede the Flames, as it made the place too hot for the rest, so it waked my Uncle, who being supported by two Servants, got up; but in an Instant fell down again, being I suppose suffocated by the sulphureous Vapours, and the orifice of his Stomach closed up, that was naturally weak and puling. Three days after this, his Body was found whole and intire, without the least hurt or mark upon it, and in the same Cloaths he last put on; in a Posture too, that made him rather look like one that was asleep than dead. While this happen'd, my Mother and I were at *Misenus*,

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Select Letters out of Pliny. 47

but this is nothing to the History, and you desired to be inform'd in no other particulars, but those that related to the Death of my Uncle. I will therefore conclude, but before I do that, give me leave to add, That I have given you a true and faithful Account of all that has come to my knowledge. I leave it to you to pick out what you think most proper for your Purpose; for it is one thing to write a Letter, and another to write a History; one thing to write to a Friend, and another to address himself to all the World. *Farewel.*

To Sura.

Lib. 7. Epist. 27.

YOU and I are both at Leisure, you to teach, and I to be inform'd; I have for a long while earnestly desired to know, whether there are any such Things in Reality, as Spectres, or whether they are only the Results of a fearful Imagination: For my part, I am inclined to believe the former, by what happened, as I have been told the Story, to *Curtius Rufus*: He was walking up and down a Portico towards
Dd the

48 *Select Letters out of Pliny.*

the Evening, when the Shape of a Woman appear'd to him, but much bigger than the Life, and much more beautiful: This unexpected Sight strangely surprized him, when the Phantome told him she was *Afric*, and came on purpose to tell him his Fortune; adding that he was going to *Rome*, where he should be advanced to the greatest Honours; that he should return back to this Province in Quality of Governour, and there die. Every thing exactly happened as the Spectre foretold. The Story goes, that as he was sailing for *Carthage*, and coming out of the Ship, the very same Figure met him upon the Shore, upon which he fell Sick, and remembring what it had formerly told him, gave over all hopes of Recovery, before the Physicians thought his Case dangerous. But what I am now going to tell you, as it is by much stranger, so it is more terrible than the other. There was a large and stately House at *Athens*, but untenanted, by reason of the ill Name it lay under; for in the depth of the Night you might hear a Noise like that of the dragging of Chains, which at first seemed to be further off, but by degrees came nearer and nearer to you: At last a Ghost appear'd in the Shape of a old man, Lean and Meager, with a long beard, and the Hair of his
Head

Head matted; It had Fetters about its Legs, and Manacles on its Hands, which it shak-
ed and rattled. These strange Noises di-
sturbed the Neighbourhood so, that few or
none could sleep for them; some fell Sick
with watching so long, and their Fears in-
creasing, died soon after; for tho' the Spe-
ctre was not visible in the Day, yet their
Memory still represented it to their Eyes,
and one Fear begot another: For this Rea-
son no one would dwell in the House, but
it stood empty, and was left wholly to the
Ghost, to play his Midnight-frolicks in;
however, there was a Bill put over the
Door, to signify that the House was to be
Let or Sold, if by chance they cou'd meet
with a *Chapman*, who knew nothing that
it was haunted. It happened that one
Athenodorus, a Philosopher, coming to
Athens, read the Bill, enquired after the
Rent and suspecting there was something
extraordinary in the Matter, because it was
to be had so cheap, he informs himself of
the Neighbours, who fairly acquainted him
with the whole Business: He was so far
from being discouraged by it, that it made
him the more eager to strike a Bargain.
When it began to grow dark, he order'd a
Bed to be made for him in a Room that
faced the Street; he call'd for Paper, Ink,

50 *Select Letters out of Pliny.*

and Candle, and ordered all his Servants to withdraw; he employ'd his Mind, his Eyes, his Hands in Writing, left his Imagination, having nothing to employ it, might be at leisure to create Visions and Spectres: All the former part of the Night the Scene continued quiet enough, at last he heard the rattling of Iron, and shaking of Chains. Our Philosopher did not so much as lift up his Eyes to see what was the Matter, not left off Writing, but endeavoured all he could to neglect it; the Noise still increasing, and moving nearer, so that sometimes it seem'd to be within, and sometimes without the Room, at last *Athenodorus* look'd behind him and saw it, just as the Neighbours had described it to him. It stood still, and beckon'd with its Finger, like a Man that calls to another. He on the other side makes a sign with his Hand, that it should tarry a little for him, and falls to Writing again. All this while the Spectre rattled his Chains over his Head as he writ, and he looking behind him, found that it beckoned to him as before, so he took up his Candle in his Hand, and followed it: The Ghost walked leisurely along as if its Chains did hinder it, after that it turn'd into the Court-yard, and immediately vanish'd under Ground. Our
Philosopher

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Philosopher took some Leaves and Herbs that he might know the Place again; the next Day he goes to the Magistrates of the Town and advised 'em to dig in the place where this happen'd: which they accordingly did, and found a parcel of Bones wrapt about with Iron-Chains formerly belonging to a Body, which Time, and the Earth together had putrified. These reliques were publickly Buried, after which the House was haunted no more. I am inclin'd to believe this Story, having had it so confidently affirm'd to me.—— I earnestly intreat you to bestow a little Consideration to inform me better upon this Point. 'Tis a Subject worthy of your deepest Enquiry, tho' I confess I am not worthy to have you to communicate your Learned Thoughts to me. Although you can plead on both sides, and manage an Argument either *pro* or *con*, as the Custom of the Gentlemen at the Bar is, yet I beg you not to employ that Talent here, but fairly to determine the Point, because I wou'd not be dismiss'd uncertain or left in suspense, since this is the Reason of my giving you this Trouble, *Farewel*,

The End of Pliny's Select Epistles.

LETTERS
OUT OF
Mons. FOUTENELLE.

Made English by the same Hand.

—To Mademoiselle de J—

*Upon sending to her a Boar in a Pasty; who
had like to have wounded him at the Chase.*

Madam,

I Have ran the greatest Risk in the World, but at last my Enemy is defeated, and now I send him to you bound to his good Behaviour in Pye-crust. I have ordered him to be well Spiced and season'd with Salt, to preserve the Memory of my Triumph. Had I been acquainted with the Receipt of the ancient Ægyptians, I wou'd have embalm'd him, and made a Mummy

Mummy of his Body: By that means he would have lasted numberless Ages, but it unluckily falls out with us Moderns, that we have no other secret but this of Paste. Imagine that this Animal you see before you, had no great mind that I should kill him: As soon as he saw me, away he scamper'd as if the Devil had been behind him, but on a sudden turn'd full upon me with a felonious Intent to Murder me. Upon which I deliberated with my self what I had best to do. I cou'd not tell but you might have set him against me, for whenever I see any thing that is dismal or terrible, I immediately conclude that it comes from you. But after I had well examin'd the Boar's Countenance, I cou'd not find that he came upon any such errand. There was another Difficulty still behind, and that was to know, whether I had not best die to put an end to those cruel Torments you make me suffer; but there was too much Self-interest I thought to take that course, and I humbly conceiv'd it was for your Ladiship's Honour, that a Lover so faithful as I, shou'd live, altho' he did not find his Account in it. Thus the Zeal that I had for your Glory cost the poor Boar his Life, who little imagin'd he had to deal with an Adversary, that was animated by

so powerful a Motive. In short, I shot my Gentleman dead upon the Spot; and his Brother Boars I presume will have more Guts in their Brains for the future, then to pick a Quarrel with such as preserve their Lives on purpose for you. I shou'd be the happiest Man in the Universe, Madam, if you wou'd feed heartily upon him out of Revenge, for having been so impudent to put me in peril of my Life; and if that Consideration would make him go down the better with you, I am,

Your most Obedient, &c.

To Monsieur C—

Upon the Cartesian Philosophy.

SO then 'tis a plain Case, I find that you have lost your Understanding. It seems you are turn'd Philosopher of late, and what is more, you belong to that Sect of Philosophy, which is the oddest in the World. Among other Heretical Doctrines, you maintain that there are no such things as Colours: Nay you pretend that Beasts are Machines, and move by Clock-work: In fine, you turn things topsie turvy after
so

ſo ſtrange a rate, that a Man can't tell what to truſt to. I ſpoke of it the other day to Madam B—— who is very much your Friend, and is heartily afflicted, at the loſs of your Reason: I dare ſwear ſhe wou'd ſtrangle *Des Cartes* in one of her Garters if ſhe had him in the Room; for in ſhort, his Philoſophy is not to be endured in a Chriſtian Country; it robs the Ladies of their Beauty, and makes them all as ugly as Witches. If there is no ſuch thing as Colours, there's conſequently no ſuch thing as a fine Complexion; and what will become then of the Lilies and Roſes in the Cheeks of our great Beauties? You'll come off but ſcurvily, let me tell you, if you think to appeaſe them, by ſaying that Colours are in the Eyes of thoſe that look upon them, and not in the Objects themſelves. The Ladies won't depend upon the Eyes of other Men for their Complexion, but are reſolv'd to hold it of themſelves and not at the Courteſie of every Spectator. If there are no Colours in the Night, our Friend Mr. N—— is finely brought to bed, who fell in Love with Madam L—— merely upon the ſcore of her fine Face, and married her. It wou'd be a great Mortification to him, after having believed that he has the fineſt red and white in the Univerſe

verse between his Arms, to find there is no such thing as red and white in Nature. But if the Complexion is a cheat upon our Senses, what will you say to those Ladies that practise the Mystery of Painting, and lay on the Carnation and the White as thick as Plaister? 'Tis certain nothing can be more real, and so these Ladies will enjoy a Privilege above the rest of their Sex, I mean that of having a true Complexion; however all the World are of another Opinion, and will positively tell you that theirs is not true.

I desire you to answer this Argument at your leisure; but this is not all, for Madam *De B* — and my self have found out another Objection against your Philosophy, which you'll find it no easie matter to solve. You pretend that Beasts are no less Machines than Watches; now I dare engage, that if you put a certain Machine call'd a Dog, and another Machine call'd a Bitch together in the same Room, there will result a third little Machine from their corresponding together; whereas you may keep two Watches together as long as you live, nay, till Dooms-day if you please, and they will never produce a third Watch between 'em. Now Madam *B* — and I find by our Philosophy, that any two things

things that have the faculty to produce a third out of themselves, are of a Class much superiour to that of Machines. We give you time to consider of an Answer to these Objections, for we know very well that you must consult your Books, before you'll be able to do it. Madam B— sends you word by me, that she will not receive a Visit from you, before you have made some Reparation to her Complexion: As for me, I assure you, I am a Piece of Clock-work newly wound up, to go in your Service, and am

Your most Obedient Servant.

To Madam D— V—

Upon sending her a Black and a Monkey.

Madam,

A *Fric*, to oblige you, has exhausted herself, and sends you two of the oddest Creatures she produces, so that nothing would be wanting to make my Present compleat, if I cou'd send you a Crocodile to keep them Company. Both of them are in Perfection, the Black is the saddest Dog of

of all Blacks, and the Monkey the most malicious Devil of all Monkeys. I can assure you, that one of these Beasts, has a mighty Respect for the other, and is a profest Admirer of his Ingenuity and great Parts. You'll soon discover that this Admirer is the Black. Besides that, it is an Article of Faith among those of his Nation, that the Monkeys have as much Reason as themselves, but that they conceal it as much as they can, by not talking, for fear Men shou'd clap Pack-saddles upon their Backs, and make them Work for their Living : This Black, Madam, has a particular Esteem for the Monkey, as having lived under the same Roof many Years with him, and has not a jot of Understanding more than he has learnt in his long acquaintance with him. But I have one Advice to give you, Madam, and that is to look him frequently in the Face : Our Blacks in *France* turn tawny, and become of an Olive Complexion, which is enough to scare *Lucifer* out of his Senses. The Physical Reason of this is, because the Sun is not strong enough in our Climate to keep up that charming Black which it gives 'em in *Afric* ; but, Madam, your Eyes, that are so lively and piercing, will supply the defect of the Sun ; and will not let him lose an Ace of his primitive Com-

Mounſieur Fountenelle. 59

Complexion. I am extremely glad that you will always have a *Slave* in your preſence to repreſent me; he is not more yours than I am; if he gives you any Occaſion to have him well Cudgel'd ſometimes, to put him in mind of his Duty, he ſomething reſembles me, for the Devil of Rebellion often tempts me to revolt againſt you. As for the Monkey pray don't be ſurpriſed, Madam, if you hear Sighs come from him, that are ſtrong enough to turn about a Wind-mill, if you ſee him paſs whole Nights without ſleeping a Wink, if you find him as Melancholy as a Horſe in a Pound, when he is not in your Company; in fine, if he eats little and can't divert himſelf in any thing, for I muſt tell you, Madam, that like a truſty Servant he has learnt all this of his old Maſter, who is,

Your moſt Obedient, &c.

To

*To the Same.**On the Death of her Monkey.*

I Am told your Monkey is gone the way of all Flesh, at which I am exceedingly griev'd, for I am like to be a great Loser by his Decease, since I have no body now to put you in mind of me but the Black. The unhappy Creature I suppose broke his Heart because he was not able to imitate me before you, as well as he desir'd; indeed there was nothing which he could not handsomly counterfeit with infinitely more ease than my Passion; but may his Destiny light upon all my Rivals that shall have the Insolence to be the Apes of my Affection; perhaps too the poor thing drew your Displeasure upon himself, for endeavouring to imitate my Passion, and so unluckily dy'd of Despair. If it is so, I have nothing left me to do, but to imitate him in my turn, and to die after him. I am inform'd you have shed some Tears for him; it is something of the latest to repent for your ill Usage of the poor Creature, but regulate your Conduct I beseech you by him, and don't oblige me to die,
if

Monsieur Foutenelle. 61

if you must needs regret me after Death. It is very probable that if you so heartily lament the Party that imitated me, you'll grieve ten times more for your humble Servant. I am an Original of Tenderneſs, and if you loſe me, you are not like to find my Fellow in haſte, but muſt even content your ſelf with very ſcurvy Copies. But, Madam, let me conjure you, not to uſe the Black the worſe becauſe he is my Re- preſentative; it wou'd be very hard upon him indeed, if for that Reaſon he muſt meet with the Deſtiny of the Monkey. Can you ſuffer nothing to be near you, that has the Miſfortune to bear ſome Reſem- blance of my Fidelity and Devotion for you, but you muſt kill it by your Cruelty? The Tears I ſhed for the Death of the Monkey are better founded than yours, ſince his Adventure teaches me what I am to expect. Farewel, Madam, but remem- ber if you pleaſe, that you cannot reſtore the late deſunct to Life again, but that you have ſtill the Power to preſerve

Your humble Servant, &c.

To

To Mademoiselle de C—

Upon sending her an Extract of the Church-Register.

Madam,

I Can without Vanity boast, that I make you to Day a very considerable Present: In short, I give you two whole Years; you thought you were twenty two Years old, and I bring it you attested in a Paper under Hand and Seal, that you are but twenty; now I reckon that I give you these Years which I take away from you, and indeed in these matters we never reckon otherwise. The two years you thought had past over your Head, are still to come, and I do my self the Honour to make you a Present of them. I am ready to die for fear, Madam, that you will not value them as they deserve; But good Heavens! the Man that were able to make such a Present, to certain Ladies that shall be nameless, what Favours might he not expect from their Hands? Where are the Charms and Graces, the fine Expressions, and Compliments that can be put into the Balance with two compleat Years? It is but
reasona-

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reasonable, Madam, I think, that you ſhou'd employ 'em wholly upon me, ſince you are indepted to me for 'em. When they are gone and paſt; you may do what you pleaſe, I ſhall then pretend to have no manner of Right over you, but with Submiſſion, Madam, from the preſent Moment, till you are compleatly twenty two, you wholly belong to me. After that, I leave you juſt as I found you, at Liberty to break off or continue the Commerce, according as you ſee convenient; but if I find you not at all inclined to do me Juſtice, know, Madam, that I will ſuffer no one to Love you, upon the Foot of twenty years. Where-ever I go I will proclaim to all the World, that in truth you had not been ſo old by two Years, if you had not been ſo minded, but that you refuſed to accept 'em from me, and that ſince you don't Love me, 'tis but requiſite you ſhould reckon your ſelf twenty two Years old. You little imagine perhaps to what ſtrange Hazards you expoſe your ſelf, by making me Maſter of the Secret of your Age: for 'tis a Secret, Madam, which thoſe of your Sex keep inviolably to themſelves, and perhaps the only one a Woman can keep. Several Ladies have truſted me with the Affairs of their Families; nay, even with their Intrigues; but I cou'd never yet

meet with one so open hearted as to trust me with her Age: There are a thousand Women that will run up to the Mouth of a Cannon, that will hang or drown with as much cheerfulness as if they were going to a Gossiping, that will make you nothing to jump down four Stories: but, I never found a Woman, that had Courage and Resolution enough to tell her Age. The truth on't is, the older they are, the more sensible they become of what Importance it is, that they had not so many Years upon the account. As for you, Madam, who have not plaid your Cards so cautiously as you should have done, you little think how you will tremble one Day lest I should tell any Tales of you. Your Destiny will depend upon me, and there is nothing which I cannot force you to comply with, if instead of a Ponyard I send you the Extract of the Church-register. I suppose you laugh at my Menaces now and think the time is so far off, that you don't believe I shall ever live to see it. I am afraid indeed you'll prove a Prophetess, for unless you are less rigorous, you ll soon dispatch

Your most Obedient, &c.

The End of Monsieur Fontenelle's Letters.

Original

Original Letters.

Lately Written by Mr. Brown.

*To his honoured Friend, Dr. Baynard
at the Bath.*

Dear Doctor,

July 6. 99.

WHILE here in Town we are almost
Roasted by the hot Weather, and
the Sun plays so warmly on us, that some
People who were of no *Religion* before,
talk of turning *Adamites* in their own De-
fence ; I cannot but laugh to think what a
blessed Pickle you are in at the *Bath*, where
such Crowds of you Stew in so little a Pip-
kin ; where you broil upon the Earth, par-
boil in the Water, and you breath the
Composition of Gunpowder ; or, were
there nothing extraordinary in your Soyl,
your Climate, or the Season of the Year,
where you have pretty Ladies enough to
set you all on Fire, though you were two

or three Degrees more to the *North* than *Lapland*, and I were Writing to you now in the midst of *January*.

This is the *first* Summer since the *Revolution*, that the Sun has been pleased to dispence any Favours to us, for hitherto we have had as little Reason to complain of his Benignity to us, as the *Politiques* of our *States-men*. Our *Fruits* have ripen'd without the Influence of the one, as our *Affairs* have made a shift to rub on without any great *Conjuring* on the part of the other. But to leave off these censorious reflections upon our *States-men*, and return to the Sun that occasion'd them, this Noble Planet that ripens the *Grape*, will likewise ripen Fevers, and other such generous Distempers, to the great Joy of the *Poets* and *Physicians*; and *Phæbus*, their common Father, will encourage his own *Tribe*, by raising up a new Stock of *Wines* and *Diseases*. Indeed, where you are, it is almost impossible for the Gentlemen of the *Faculty* to want *Business*; for if our last Advices from the *Bath*, don't deceive us, you have almost as many *Doctors* upon the Spot as you have *Patients*, that watch the coming in of every *Coach*, as nicely as a young Boy at the University does the Return of the *Carrier*, and ply at all Corners of the Streets, as regularly,

ly, as the *Watermen* do at the *Temple Stairs*: But it has long ago been observ'd of you *Physicians*, as of the *Lawyers*, that they will find or make Work, where-ever they come; and accordingly I knew a little Town in *Essex*, where the *Inhabitants*, time out of mind, had lived in as *uninterrupted* Tranquillity, as the happy *Indians* did in *America*, before the *Spaniards* came to beat up their Quarters; but upon an *Attorney's* coming to reside amongst 'em, the Face of *Affairs* was immediately alter'd, Tenants *conspir'd* against their Landlords, Hostlers *revolted* from their Masters, and the Apprentices took up *Arms* against their lawful Tyrants: There was nothing but rubbing out of *Milk* and *Alehouse Scores*, to the everlasting *confusion* of their Country *Arithmeses*, Not a *Tithe-egg* could be had without an *Action*, nor a *Pig* under a Suit in *Chancery*. A Spirit of *Division* had crept into every Family, Maids *betray'd* their Mistresses, Girls *rebell'd* against their Grandmothers, and Sweet-hearts *deserted* their confiding Damsels; in short, every Man stood as much upon his own *Guard*, as if he had been in an *Enemy's* Country; these were the blessed *Effects* of the *Lawyer's*, living amongst 'em.

Now, Doctor, it were a very *hard* Case, if having so much *Credit* at the *Bath*, you cou'd not do as *much* for your self, as the above mention'd *Attorney* did to promote his own *Business*; if you cou'd not *Philosophically* Reason People into *Distempers* they were never troubled with, like the Dissenting Parsons that *Fly-blow* their Hearers with Scruples they knew nothing of before: If you cou'd not *cure* them of Ails they never *felt*, and *leave* behind you *Maladies*, you never *found* upon them. But I am inform'd that the Tub-Preachers are very much *dissatisfied* that you *invade* their Territories, and *encroach* upon their Prerogative of Hell. Your *hot* and *cold* Baths (they say) put their *Brimstone* and *Ice* out of Countenance; and 'tis reported, that by the *skilful* Management of your Torments, by scalding your Patients at the Bath in *July*, and *freezing* them at *Islington* in *December*, you've broke half the *Retailers* of the Terrors of *Pluto's* Kingdom.

But to come now to the *News* of the Town, we have had an *Apparition* lately here, stranger than in any *Glanvill* or *Aubry*; for it has appeared in the Streets at *noon Day*, and thousands of People are ready to depose that they have seen it. By this strange Apparition, I mean the *White*
Parson,

Parson, so call'd for his wearing a *White* Hatband, Scarf, and Surcingle, by which he *distinguishes* himself from the rest of his Brethren. I cou'd wish you had been here in *Holbourn* t'other Morning, to have seen his *Cavalcade*: He rode up the Hill as great as a Prince, and like other *Princes* signalized his Entry with Printed *Declarations*; with a great Rabble of *loud-mouth'd* Hawkers, Male and Female, *bellowing* it on every side of him; and 'tis supposed by the *Learned* in Astrology, that he will *keep* this Declaration as *Religiously* as some other *Princes* beyond Sea have *kept* theirs: In short, he pretends to preach the Gospel *Gratis*, and indeed as he manages it, it is pity he shou'd have a *Farthing* for it: He calls the rest of his Cloth *Hirelings*, only for taking what the *Law* allows them, though unless the Fellow is bely'd, he would accept of a *Pot* of Ale from a Chimney-sweeper, and has *preach'd* a hundred times upon a *Joint-stool* for a pickl'd *Herring*, and a *Poringer* of burnt Brandy. The *Rozinante*, on which this *Don Quixote* rode, had a Laurel-garland about his Head, and I dare swear, deserv'd the *Bays* as well as his *Master*; for the Wretch, as I am inform'd, is troubled with a *Whore* of a Wife, and a *Filt* of a Muse, but the latter is more common *Prostitute* of the two. E e 4 But,

But, dear Doctor, *News* is as scarce in Town, as *Fees* at the *Bath*, and it falls out *unluckily* for you and me, that we must *change* Places, to find what we *want*; for I hear you have a Mint at the *Bath* for *Scandal*, as we have hear for *Money*; so that 'tis but *shifting* the Scene, and we may draw *Bills* upon one another, to answer our several Occasions, till when, I am,

Your most humble, &c.

Melanissa to Alexis.

GIVE me leave, my dearest *Alexis*! give me leave, who *love* you better than my *Life*; to lay some of your *failings* before you, and if I express my self with a little more *warmth* than *becomes* me, you will easily forgive this freedom, unless I am mightily *mistaken* in your Temper, when you find it *wholly* regard your own *Interest* and *Welfare*.

It is not without a *sensible* Concern that I see you *abandon* your self to the *Bottle* of late: A young Fellow, but especially one like *Alexis*, ought to *devote* himself to another *Divinity*; old Age indeed may be
allow'd

allow'd to supply its *defect* of Warmth with Wine, but Youth as it *needs* it not, so Nature advises it to pursue a more *agreeable* Game. But can any thing in the World be so *absurd* as to surfeit our selves with *Cordials*, when we have not the *least* Indisposition?

To convince you then that my Complaint is neither *unjust* nor *unreasonable*, I, who know so little of the World, and have nothing but *Nature* to guide me; I who am a *Stranger* to Language, and Style, and consequently must *maim* my Thoughts, for want of knowing how *properly* to express them, will endeavour to describe to you, a Night as it passes away in the *Embraces* of an agreeable *Mistress*, accompany'd with all the *Transports* and *Tendernesses* of Love, and the Night as it is commonly *spent* by what the Town call Men of *Wit* and *Pleasantry*, at the *Rose* or *Blue-posts*:

The *Play* is now over, and the Sparks, who while it was *Acting*, rallied the *Vizard-Masques*, *laugh'd* aloud at their own No-jests, *censur'd* the Dress and Beauty of all the Ladies in the Boxes; and, in short, minded every thing, but the Representation that *brought* them thither, begin now to *File* off, and gravely debate how and where to *spend* the Evening; At last the *Tavern* is
pitch'd

pitch'd upon, the Room taken, and our learned *Criticks* in Pleasure seat themselves round the Table.

The *Master* of the House is the *first* Person they send to *Advise* with; who, after a thousand Cringes and Scrapes, tells them, He has the best *Champagne* and *Burgundy* in Town, and is sure to ask an *exorbitant* Price for't, though 'tis a vile nasty *Mixture* of his own Brewing. After a *long* and *foolish* Dispute, the Rate is adjusted, Napkins are called for, the Muff, Sword and Periwigg *nicely* laid up, and now something-like *Business* comes forward.

When these *grand* Preliminaries are settled, the next *important* Debate is, what they must eat; so the *Cook* is sent for, who recommends to them something *Nice* and *Dear*; this Difficulty with much a-do got over, the *Glasses* plentifully *walk* round, to *blunt* and *weaken* that Appetite which they pretend to *excite* by it.

And now their *Hearts* begin to open, and their *Tongues* to communicate their most secret *Thoughts*. The topping *Beauties* of the Town are the *first* Subjects of their Conversation, and this is so ample a Field, that they soon *lose* their way in it; one boasts of *Favours* receiv'd from a Lady, and is very particular as to the *Moles* of her Body, whom

whom perhaps he never *saw* any where but at the *Play-house*; another *toasts* a Countess, whom he pretends to *admire* in a most extraordinary manner, and gives broad *Items* of some condescending *steps* she lately made towards him; after which he *wipes* his Mouth most *demurely*. In short, 'tis resolv'd by the Board, *Nemine contradicente*, that there is not one *honest* Woman in the three Kingdoms, who has *Beauty* enough to gain her a *Lover*.

When this Argument is pretty well *exhausted*, the next thing they talk of, is the *Authors* of the Town, and what *Books* and *Plays* have lately appear'd: Upon this Head, every Man in the Company *affects* to discover a *peculiar* Taste and Judgment, and thinks he shews his *Wit* by finding Faults, where there are none; the *Play*, whatever it is, is taken to *pieces*, the *Plot* upon Examination, is found either to be *stolen*, or not to be well *unravel'd*, the *Scenes* are *languishing*, the *Characters* threadbare, or not worth a Farthing; in fine, the *Poet* is sent to the *Devil* for want of Wit, as the pert *Critick* thinks he shews his, by *condemning* what he doth not *understand*.

All

All this while the *ungodly* Brimmer walks incessantly round the Table, the Company soon dwindles into *private* Cabals, every Man talks *busily* to his Neighbour, Affairs of *State* are determin'd, this *Minister* is displac'd; and t'other Man put into his room; The Proceedings in *Parliament* laid down before-hand, and 'tis *concluded* what Regiments shall *stand*, and what be *broken*; after this *Punctilio's* of Honour come to be *discuss'd*, the freshest Duels behind *Mountague-house*, and *Chelsey-fields* are *learnedly* run over. Sir *John* — is a Coward for suffering Captain — to tread upon his Toes in the *Pit*, and not calling him to *Account* for it; Damn you, cries another *Jack* — is as *Gallant* a Knight as ever drew *Sword*, and whoever says any thing to the *contrary*, is a *Son* of a Whore and a *Villain*, and I'll cut his Throat; with that he throws a *Bottle* at t'other's Head, the *Glasses* go to rack, the *Table* is overturn'd; nothing but *Disorder* and *Confusion* is in the Room, and all this *Mirth* and *Jollity* concludes in *Murder*.

Or if the *Scene* doth not end altogether so *Tragically*, but they part Friends as they came in, ten to one but a merry *Frolick* is proposed: The Quarters of some ill-natured *Coquette* are to be beaten up, and her

poor

poor *Windows* must feel the sad Effects of their Heroick *Valour*; but while they are carrying on this *Attaque* with unparallelled Vigour and Gallantry; behold the *Super-intendant* of the Night, with his trusty Guard of *Myrmidons* falls upon their main Body; some of our *Heroes* lie sprawling in the Kennel, with their trusty and well-beloved Periwigs, Hats, and Muffs lying by 'em; the embroider'd *Coat* is all over cover'd with *Dirt* and *Blood*, the well-adjusted *Cravat* torn to *Raggs*, the *Sword* either broken or carried off in the *Tumult*; and thus, after a well-favour'd *Drubbing*, our Sparks make a shift to *crawl* home to their Lodgings, if the Nocturnal *Magistrate* and his *Canibals*, don't hurry 'em to *New-prison* or the *Round-house*, the usual Sanctuary of such Adventurers.

But suppose nothing of this happens, and our merry Gentlemen get home *safe* from the Tavern, without any *Disaster* or *Calamity* by the way; yet the next *Morning* calls 'em to a *severe* Account, for the *Misdemeanors* and *Intemperance* of the preceeding *Night*: Their *Head akes*, their whole *Frame* is in *disorder*, they are incapable of *relishing* either *Books* or *Conversation*; even *Musick* it self, with all its boasted *Efficacy*, is not able to *allay* their Pains,
the

the most exquisite *Dishes* are nauseous to 'em, they *starve* amidst the greatest *profusion* of Luxury, and *curse* that Extravagance over Night that *Starves* them the next Day in the midst of *Plenty*. 'Tis certain, that I have been *favourable* in this Description, 'tis certain that I have not set down half the Disorders that accompany a Debauch while 'tis a making, nor half the ill Effects that happen after it. Let us now *turn* the Tables, to find whether Love can be reproach'd with any of these *Inconveniences* that use to attend *Drunkenness*: Let us see how the Moments *wear* away in the Embraces of a delicious *Mistress*; and then we shall soon discover on which *side* the *Advantages* lie, and be able to *decide* this Controversie.

I know very well that I want *Eloquence* and *Language*, to describe the Raptures and Transports of *Love* as they *deserve*; however, I am so well assur'd of the *Goodness* of my Cause that although I am an *unfit* Advocate to defend it, yet I don't much *despair* of carrying my Point.

The long expected *Night* at last arrives, when *Amyntas* is to be made *happy* in the Arms of his beloved *Dorinda*. With his Head full of a thousand *delightful* Idea's, (for Love is so *good-natur'd*, as to pay his
 Notaries

Votaries *part* of their *Pleasure* before-hand) he comes to the happy Mansion, where the chief *Treasure* of his Soul resides, he *knocks* gently at the Door; the *trusty* Maid conducts him by the Hand in the *dark*, and leads him to his Mistress's Apartment.

At the *first* Interview, he is all *rapt* up in Silence and Astonishment, his Thoughts so *croud* upon him, that they *hinder* one another in the Passage; after he is a little *re-*cover'd, he endeavours to *speak*; but, alas! his Eyes talk infinitely more than his Tongue. On *her* part, the Confusion is no less and her *Joys* equally tumultuous; thus finding themselves *unable* to Discourse, they tell their Passion in *Sighs* and *Glances*; they confirm it by repeated *Kisses*, and at every *Kiss* their *fluttering* Souls meet at their *Mouths*.

Amyntas squeezes that Hand, which almost *dissolves* in the touch; he presses those glowing *Breasts* that wou'd warm the coldest *Hermit*; but all this is nothing but the *Prologue* to the succeeding *Drama*. Love calls upon 'em for a more *substantial* Repast, though they are *undrest* in a Minute, yet this very Minute seems an *Age*; and now they are going to *tast* all that Felicity, which Love can *bestow*, or Humane Nature can *bear*.

The

The Candle is put out to *hide* the blushes of *Dorinda*; she finds her *eager* Lover by her side, who cost her so many *Tears* and *Sighs* in private. The happy Lover is lost in a *Labyrinth* of pleasure; sometimes he abandons her *Breast* for her *Mouth*, and sometimes her *Mouth* for her *Breast*, and is only *uneasie* he cannot Kiss 'em both together. He *Faints*, he grows *Giddy* with the Excess of Joy: nothing but *half-formed* Words and Murmurs can come from him; at last he approaches Love's *Altar* at last he——But here my Pen *fails* me, I am forced to draw a *Veil* over those Raptures, which 'tis not in the *Power* of mortal Eloquence to represent.

Thus our happy *Lovers*, after they have paid repeated *Oblations* to Love, lay intranced in one anothers *Arms*, and act over in their busie *Dreams*, the *delicious* Scene that so transported 'em *waking*.

The Morning *approaches*, the blushing Morning *awakens* the transported Pair. *Amyntas* is beholding to its *Light*, for showing him the *Nymph*, in whose Embraces he so agreeably past the Night. She *charmed* him in the Dark, she ravishes him in the Light; and the only *Uneasiness* that attends their Happiness, is *Impatience* to repeat the Bliss.

Both

Both the Lovers rise *equally* satisfied, with having *done* their Parts, with Gayety in their *Looks*, and Satisfaction in their *Souls*: Parting gives them some *Pain*, but that is sufficiently *recompensed* at their next Meeting.

Thus I have endeavour'd, my *Alexis*, to show what a vast *Difference* there is between a Night *murder'd* in the Excess of Wine, and a Night *consecrated* to Love.

Though no Truth is more *evident* than this; yet our *Youth*, possess'd by what fatal Stupidity, I cannot tell, generally *Sacrifice* to the Deity, who rewards his most *constant* Worshippers the worst. Instead of *following* the Dictates of *Nature*, whom they ought to *obey*, they treat her like an *Enemy*, and profane those *Temples*, where they ought to pay their Devotions.

I know well enough, that you Gentlemen, don't much care to be *Advised* by those frail Things call'd *Women*, and perhaps too you will tell me, that *Interest* has made me say all this. However, let me conjure you to bestow a few *thoughts* upon what I have *offer'd* to you, and believe that no one *loves* you so *dearly* and *tenderly* as

Melanissa.

To a Litigious Country-Attorney.

A Letter of Gallantry.

Worthy Sir,

THat I am no *Stranger* to your *Character* (tho', I bless my Stars for it, I am to your *Person*) you'll soon find, if you'll give your self the trouble to read the following Lines: There is no great pleasure indeed in drawing *Monsters*: however, since it may be of *Publick* Advantage to have 'em *described* in their true proper Colours, that others may *avoid*, and *detest* 'em, I have *ventur'd* at the Task, and how well I have *performed* it, leave your self to be Judge. To *accommodate* my self to the Dialect of your Profession, I will begin my Letter like a Bond, with a *Noverint*. *Universi*: And may all Men accordingly *know* by these Presents, That Mr. M. C. is the veriest *pettifogging* Rascal that ever scandaliz'd a *Green Bag*, or came within the Walls of *Westminster-Hall*.

I have often wonder'd, that Providence shou'd be at the *Trouble* and *Expence* of Disordering the whole Fabrick of *Nature*, when it has decreed to *punish* us with

Dearths

Deaths and Famines, since it may go a more *compendious* Way to work, and effect all these *Calamities* by the Ministry of *Lawyers*. Give a true *Lawyer* but Pen, Ink, and Parchment, and I dare engage he will *starve* the Country ten Miles round him. The most *odious* Animals, and the most *contemptible* Insects, have some *use* or other; *living* or *dead*, or at least serve to *diversifie* the Universe: Toads, they say, suck up the *Venome* of the Earth; Snakes are *useful* in Medicine; but it wou'd puzzle the *wisest* Naturalist to find out any thing good in a lawyer. I mean such abominable *Incendiaries* as thou art, who thrive by *Rapine*, and batten upon *Extortion*, and build their own *Fortune* upon the *Destruction* of those poor Wretches who fly to them for *Justice*. We see *puny* Rascals, of a *lower* Class, *truss'd* up every Sessions, for *petty* Rogueries to thine; for *easing* the Hedges of some lousie *Linnen*, for *nimming* of *Cloaks*, *stealing* of supernumerary *Spoons*, &c. when Gigantic overgrown Villains, like thy self, set a whole County together by the Ears, and pick their Pockets during the *Fray*, yet are so far from being call'd to an Account for it. But tho', Sir, these worthy Gentlemen have *Tricks* and *Evasions* enough to *escape* Justice here, yet they pay

Cent. per Cent. Interest, for their Cheating in another World. The Devil never keeps a *Holiday* in good *earnest*, but when an *Attorney* of thy Complexion makes a *perpendicular* Leap into his Dominions; and he will no more *part* with him, when he has got him into his Clutches, than one of his own Lawyers will *refund* a Fee; *Possession* being eleven Points of the Law in *Hell*, as well as in *Westminster-Hall*.

Thus, Sir, you see I have made a little *familiar* with you and your *Function*, and perhaps am *bolder* than *welcome*: But, Sir, I have a small *Favour* to request of you, which I must tell you before-hand you must not deny me. What I have to *propose* to you is not *unreasonable* or *difficult*; I neither desire you to make *Restitution* of what you have *unjustly* plunder'd from so many Families, (for I know a *true* Attorney wou'd sooner be *damn'd* than do that) nor to build *Hospitals*, (unless it be one for your old *Father*, Sir, who *Grazes* they tell me upon the *Common*:) No, Sir you shall find me the *fairest*, the *easiest* Man you ever dealt with.

I am informed your House stands by the side of a *famous* River, which looks as if *Providence* design'd you for the End I advise you to: So, Sir, if you please, one of these

these *fine* Mornings to take a *Leap* into it from your Garret, it will be the *best-natur'd* thing you ever did in your Life; by the by, Sir, you need not cram your Pockets with *Stones* or *Lead*, to make you *sink*, for your own *Sins* are ponderous enough to do your *business* without 'em, if the *Proverb* don't secure you. But, Sir, if you don't fancy *drowning*, as perhaps you mayn't, (and as I told you before, you shall find me the most *reasonable* Man in the Universe) why then, Sir, I wou'd advise you to *hang* your self in your Closet, in your *Wife's* Garters, or to *rip* up your Guts with a *Case-knife*, or to *cut* your Jugulars with a *Razor*, or to *take* a good large Dose of *Opium*; or lastly, to *knock* your Brains out against a *Brick-wall*: but then, Sir, *take* my Word for't, you must knock *hard*; for, your Neighbours tell me, you have got a confounded *thick* Scull. In short, Sir, I shan't insist nicely upon the *How*, the *Where*, or the *When*, provided the thing be done in any *reasonable* Time: and I promise you under my *Hand*, that the Bells shall ring *merrily*, as soon as it is accomplish'd; and to *encourage* you to proceed in this Affair, I can assure you, that you'll *Oblige* no less than a *whole* County by it, and particularly

Your unknown Friend, &c.

F f 3

To

To Mr. G. Moulton, at Tollerton-Hall
near Nottingham.

Dear Sir,

London, July 25. 99.

According to Promise I had written to you last *Saturday*, but that I was obliged to Accompany some Gentlemen that Morning to *Richmond*, in Expectation of hearing *fine Musick*, which never in the *Play-house* had pass'd the Censure of a Pit-Fop; and drinking true *Languedoc*, never yet *debauch'd* in a Vintner's Cellar. But it happen'd quite *otherwise* with us: For the Wine was such *sophisticated* Stuff, that I told the Company, it set *Drunkennes* on the same Level with *Swearing*; I mean by disarming it of all *Excuses*: And as for the *Musick*, it was so abominable, that half a dozen *Welsh-harpers* met upon *St. David's Day*, to make *merry* over a Mess of Leek-porridge, could not have tormented the Ears of a *Parcel* with more execrable. I dare almost ingage, that had the same Fellows *play'd* upon the same *Instruments* before the Town of *Jericho*, the *Walls* would have paid the same *Compliment* to their Harmony, as they did to that of the *Levites*, for nothing could have patience to
stand

stand still and *listen* to their Performances. So, after this *double* Disappointment, we were forc'd, very late in the *Evening*, or very early in the *Morning*, (I wont be positive which) to go back to our Boat, and return for *London*, reflecting all the way as severely on our mispent-time, as a Town-lady, who has oblig'd a *Player* with her *Favours* all Night, and gets nothing in the *Morning* for her Pains, but the Copy of a new *Song* for Breakfast.

When I had the *Happiness* of seeing you last in Town, I told you that you should not fail of having a Letter from me every *other* Post. I am afraid I shall be *better* than my Word, and persecute you more *constantly* than a City-vintner does a CountryParliament-man that chalk'd it *plentifully* last Winter *Sessions*. Since I have no other way of *conversing* with you but by Letters, you may depend upon *seeing* me twice a Week at least, tho' were you in Town I believe I should *scarce* visit you so often. But, dear Friend of mine, this is purely the Effect of *Absence*. I knew a certain Gentleman, who, when he was at *home* with his Wife, scarce vouchsafed to *exchange* a Word with her once a *Week*; but being obliged to take a Journey as far as *York*, he never fail'd of *writing* to her every *Post*, and lon-

ger Letters too, than a *Clergy-man* does when he recommends himself to his *Patron* for a fat Living. The reason of it is plain, because all *Blessings* (and such I say is Mr. M——'s *Conversation* to me, and every one that *knows* him) are never thoroughly *understood* when we have 'em in our *Possession*, and are never so much *valued*, as when they are at some *distance* from us.

Thus, my dear Friend, for want of something *else* to entertain you, I have fallen, the Lord knows how, into making *Moral Reflections*, which was *never* my Talent; but if a Man is to govern himself by the *Examples* he sees in this *wicked Town*, I don't know why I should not be allow'd to *Talk* out of my *Element*, as well as a Thousand more whom I cou'd name to you, were I *disposed* to be ill-natur'd: I cou'd tell you of a certain famous *Painter*, who *understands* his Trade and Business, as well as most Men living, and yet is perpetually new modeling the *Government*, and harping upon *Politiques*, which he understands just as much as the *Lord-Mayor* and *Aldermen* do *Lycophron* or *Pindar*. I know a *City Physician*, who can *dispatch* his Patients as *methodically* as any of the College, yet in spite of Nature and his own Genius, will be always *murd'ring* of Rhimes, and feeling the

Pulse

Pulse of the Muses: and another of the Faculty near *Charing-cross*, who instead of *Galen* and *Hippocrates* is perpetually puzzling himself with *Daniel*, and the *Revelations*. I know a Lawyer perfectly well versed in all the Mysteries of Conveyancing, who by his good Will, Talks of nothing in all Companies, but the Merits of *Cow Piss* and the modern Dispute betwixt *Alkali's* and *Acids*. There is also a famous *Parson* I could mention to you near *St. Dunstan's*, who Preaches his Parish fast asleep every *Sunday* with the *Opium* he puts in his Sermon, yet over his Coffee must be settling the Affairs of *Europe*, the Succession of *Spain*, and the Union of the two *East-India* Companies, of all which he Talks more wretchedly than a *Poet* of Trade, or a *Beau* of Religion; tho', by the by, this must be said in his *Justification*, that he talks much *better* of any Thing else than what he was *educated* to.

I can't tell how you'll *relish* such an insipid Letter as this, but 'tis my *Misfortune* at present, that I can't furnish you a *better* Treat: For my part, I had rather Rob the *Spittle*, or quote Second-hand Sayings from a Second-hand Wit at *Will's* Coffee-house, than be beholding to those *dull Rogues* that Write the *Weekly* News-papers: However, I hope to make you *Amends* the next Post:

Post ; and in the mean time beg leave to
Subscribe my self.

Sir, your most obedient, &c.

To the Same.

A Letter of News.

Dear Sir,

August 14, 99.

HAVING nothing of our own Growth to
Entertain you with, I stole into a
French Coffee-house near *Soho* this After-
noon ; by the same token I was within an
Ace of being talked to Death, by a parcel
of *Hugonots*, who made me undergo a fe-
werer *Persecution*, than ever they or their
Fathers suffered. 'Twas my misfortune to
ask one of them, that sat next me, a que-
stion about the *Edict* of *Nantes*, and imme-
diately the whole *Pack* open'd upon me at
once, and fell a railing at the Tyranny of
their quondam K—g, like so many Alms-
folks at the Church-wardens of their Parish.
I thought it the *best* way to make no *reply*
to them, but remove to another Table,
least I should give these *well-bred* people a
fresh occasion to *murder* me with their *Civi-*
lities.

When

When this noisy *Scene* was pretty well over, I began to examine the Foreign Papers, to see what News. But *Europe*, as large as it is; and *Europe* let me see — from the farthest Extremity of *Spain*, to the remotest Parts of *Muscovy*, is at least two thousand Miles in length, more than I shall ever be Master off; *Europe*, I say, that contains two *Empires*, fourteen *Kingdoms*, and the Devil knows how many *Principalities*, *Dukedoms*, *Marquisates* and *Earldoms*, with a *Pope* at the Head of it too, that loves to see Mischief go forward with all his heart, is not able at present to furnish out a Letter for you; but to satisfy you, that I have not been wanting, on my part, to hunt for Foreign Occurrences, I have here sent you an Abridgment of the most material Passages in the Outlandish Gazettes.

Our last Letters from *Warsaw* advise, that three *Poles* were run through the Guts, by three *German* Soldiers, and that some of the small *Diets* are broke up in a Heat; But, alas, what are *Murders* and *Mutinies* in *Poland*? No more than *Simony* in the Dominion of *Wales*. They talk too, that the Cardinal *Primate*, grumbles in his Gizzard, and is not so well affected to his new Monarch as he should be; But the Gentlemen of the sacred purple, have a privilege to be
sawcy

sawcy with Crown'd Heads. For my part, I wonder that none of our Clergy men have thought it worth the while to send him Bishop *Overhall's Convocation-book*. For certainly what help'd to open the Eyes of the D— of P—'s can never fail of working Miracles, in so enlighten'd a Country as *Poland*.

Madrid, July 20. The King of *Spain's* Health is of late much alter'd for the better, he Eats and Walks to a Miracle; for Yesterday at Dinner, he ravenously devour'd a whole Lark, and without any one to support him, made a shift to walk threescore paces out-right. This Re-establishment of his Health, the *Priests* ten to one, will Father upon some *She* or *He Saint*, that knows nothing of the Matter; but I heard a merry Gentleman a Day or two ago Account for it otherwise. As *Monica* said of her beloved Son *St. Austin's* Conversion, That it was impossible for a Son of so many *Tears* ever to miscarry; so 'tis impossible, crys this Gentleman, that a Monarch, whose *Health* is drank in all the Taverns in *Christendom*, which are not *Frenchify'd*, should find himself amiss, and I daily put up my prayers to Heaven, continues he, that a certain * Person, who waits

* This Prayer was honestly meant. but since the late Mysterious Will, and the Duke of *Anjou's* accession to the Crown of *Spain*, we find it has not succeeded.

waits so impatiently for a certain dead Man's *Spanish* Slippers, may go barefoot, and not have so much as a Pair of *French Wooden-shoes* to keep him out of the Dirt.

Paris, July 23. The King's Statue was lately set up here in the *Place de Vandome*; 'tis a perfect *Colossus*, and *Monf. Girardin* has made it appear, That our Monarch has been drawn three times bigger than the Life, not only by his *Parsons*, his *Poets*, and his *Historiographers*, but by his *Statuaries* too. The Ceremony of the Erection was very magnificent, several of the *Nobility*, the *Councillors* of the *Parliament*, and the Principal Citizens, assisted at it in all their Formalities; and if it had been the Custom of the place, the *City Recorder* had made a handsome Speech to the Figure. Our Letters from all parts of the Kingdom inform us, that the poor *Hugonots* are persecuted ten times more severely, if possible, than the *Witches* in *Scotland*, and 'tis thought deserve it as little.

Rome, July 10. Our last Letters from hence advise, that mighty Preparations are making for the ensuing *Jubilee*, most of the *Charnel-houses* and *Tooth-drawers* Shops have been disfurnished of late, on purpose to provide *Reliques* for the great number of *Votaries*

ries we expect here. A *Carmelite* Friar has brought a most valuable rarity with him from the *Holy-land*, which he presented last Week to the Old Gentleman: 'Tis the *Comb* which belong'd to the *Cock* that set *St. Peter* a Weeping; and the *Pope*, they say, designs to make a Present of it to a peculiar Favourite, who has sacrificed his All for his Holiness. We are like to be overrun with Strumpets from all Parts of *Christendom*, who flock hither partly to wipe off their old Scores, and partly to begin a fresh Tick with *Heaven*. 'Tis found by a modest Computation at present, that they are at least ten *Harlots* to one *Church-man* already. How will they be over-power'd then, when the whole *Posse* is got to *Rome*; However it is hoped that we shall have a speedy Reinforcement of Brawny well-chin'd *Regulars*, and *Seculars* from the *North*, to keep the Balance more even between the *Gown* and the *Petticoat*. This is the first time that ever a *Plurality* of *Concubines* was thought a Grievance at *Rome*.

Amsterdam, July 30. The Magistrates of this place lately took it into their pious Considerations, to reform the Abuses of the *Long Cellar*, and one of them proposed to have it lock'd up; for which he had lik'd to have been *De-Witted* by the *Mob*, for a Parcel

Parcel of *Saylors* hearing of it, gather'd in great numbers about his House, demolish'd his Windows, and had proceeded farther in their Out-rage, had not some of the topping *Burgomasters* pacified them, by telling them the old Immunities, and Privileges of the *Long Cellar* shou'd be continued to them and their Heirs for ever. It was likewise propos'd in our Council, to lay some new Penalty upon *Drunkennes*; but it being represent'd to them, that it would *increase* the People, and bring down the *Excise*, for that reason they went no farther in it. Last Week four Men and as many Women came from the *Dutchy of Juliers* to this Place, with a Spick-and-Span *new Religion* (as 'tis reported) the whole Contents of which may be carried in the compass of a *Snuff-box*: They give out that it is the *easiest* and *cheapest Religion* that ever was known, and therefore offer'd it to the *States*; who after the Genius of all Commonwealths are for saving the penny in every thing. If their Motion is reject'd, they design to Embark for *England*, and see what Market they can make of their *new Religion* with our new *Reformers* in *London*. Two learned Criticks of the University of *Leyden* have had a long Contest about the right Spelling of *Virgils* name, that is to say, whether

whether 'tis to be written with an *e* or an *i*, and old Marbles, and Manuscripts have been *plentifully* quoted in a dispute of so great *importance*, but at last, they have agreed to referr the Matter to D. B——y, who being a Person of *singular Humanity*, 'tis not doubted but he will do it to Satisfaction.

Edenburg, July 29. We have not had these ten Years so favourable a Summer as now; so that we don't doubt, but that our *Sloes* will ripen; and the *Kirk* has appointed a general Thanksgiving for it: Fifty two *Witches* are in Custody in several Prisons in this *Kingdom*, and many terrible Things are alledg'd against 'em, and some of them have been such *silly Jades* to own themselves guilty, chusing to be burnt outright, rather than be daily persecuted by the *Mass Johns*. The chief discoverer of them is a Pulpit-drubber by Profession, who knows all the *Witches* forms in the *Kingdom*; and with his *Kirk Terriers* will Unearth you ten of them in a Morning. We build great matters upon our new Colony at *Darien*, and talk of covering all the *Churches* in *Edenburgh* with Silver Tiles in a short time; but others, who are not altogether so Sanguine, are of Opinion, that all these mighty expectations will come to nothing.

nothing. And now I am upon the Chapter of *Scotland*, give me leave to tell you, what I heard a Politician say in the *Rainbow Coffee-house* yesterday upon this. I am confident, says he, that the Hand of Heaven will appear very Visible in the Chastisement of the *Scots* in this new Project of theirs upon *America*. They have impudently bid Defiance to Fate, and opposed the Decrees of Providence, for as Heaven from all Eternity decreed the *Germans* to be Drunkards, the *Spaniards* to be grave solemn Coxcombs, the *French* to be Slaves, the *Jews* to be Rascals, and the *English* to be Mutiniers; so he predestinated the *Scots* to be Pedlars; accordingly we find, all other Nations acquiesce in what Providence had order'd for them, The *Germans* to this Day get Drunk before Noon, the *Spaniard* is not to be whipt out of his Pace, the *French* carry Packsaddles, and so will do in *Sæcula Sæculorum*, the *Jews* Cheat on, and the *English* once in a Century send a Monarch a grazing, only the *Scots* must kick against the Decrees of Fate, and instead of *Pedlars*, a Title their Ancestours acquiesced in for two thousand Years, and upward, set up for *Merchants*, forsooth; but if ever they make any thing on't, says he, (and if they are not at last reduc'd to their old ancient

Pedlarism) I'll forfeit my Reputation of a Prophet to you. Altho' they have cheated King *William* out of an *Act* of *Parliament*, I believe they will find it a hard matter, with all their Craft and Cunning, to cheat Heaven.

Thus, Sir, I have sent you the most important Occurrences I could find in the Foreign Papers. But as to *London*, which uses to be an inexhaustible Magazine of News and Scandal, it affords neither at present. Our *Beaux* are all gone down to *Tunbridge* and the *Bath*, in hopes to make Conquests in both those places; where I presume they will succeed as well, as our dear Brethren beyond the *Twede* in their new *Caledonian* Plantation; and return a Month or two hence to Town with their Pockets as empty as their Heads. The Lawyers are gone down to their respective Quarters to sow Dissention amongst his Majesty's liege People in the Country, and will reap, no doubt on't, a most plentiful Harvest next *Michaelmas*-Term. Our old red-nosed Claret-drinkers have now left us, to recruit, by a Vacation-sobriety, their decayed Carcases, and enable 'em to sit up whole Nights with the Parliament-men the next Winter. In short, the Stock-jobbers have left the *Change*, and the Citizens are half of

by Mr. Brown.

97

of 'em gone to *Epsom*, in order to Cuckold
one another, which is all the News at pre-
sent from

Sir, your most obedient, &c.

To the same.

From the Gun-Musick-Booth in Smithfield.

Dear George,

Aug. 28. 99.

*All Things are bush'd, as Law it self were dead,
Poor pensive Fleetstreet, drops its mournful Head;
Smooth Alcalies in Peace with Acids sleep;
The Church and Stage no longer Difference keep;
The Strand's a Desert grown.*

AND now the Spirit of Versification
leaving me in the lurch, I come to
tell you in honest Prose, that I mean no
more by all this rumbling Stuff, than to let
you know this is the long Vacation, which
Lamyers, poor Whores, and Taylors, as well
as many other Trades agree to curse most
plentifully. Yet tho' the generality of our
people are glad this penitential Season is
near expired, for my part, I cou'd heartily
wish, as a *Soldier* does by the *Wars*, or a

G g 2

Woman

Woman by *Enjoyment*, it would last much longer.

You'll tell me, that this is a Paradox; For why the Plague shou'd a Man desire to be in Town, when it is a Solitude in a manner, and all the best Company is gone to *Tunbridge*, *Epsom* or the *Bath*? All this may be true; but before you and I part, perhaps I may bring you to be of my Opinion, I mean, reconcile you to the *Long Vacation*.

In the first place: You must know, that I hate to be in a Crowd; for which reason I wonder, why so many wise Gentlemen shou'd be so fond to go to the *Jubelee* at *Rome*, where they are like to be *throng'd* and *crowded*, as much as a Spectator at a Country Bull-baiting, and with almost as *bad* a Mob. I hope you'll pardon the *familiarity* of the Expression, for indeed, when I consider what a *mottly* Herd of *Priests*, *Fops*, and *Bigots*, will troop thither upon this Occasion, I cannot find in my heart to give them a *better* Name. In short, I love the long Vacation upon the same account that some *honest* Claret-drinkers love walking Home at *Midnight*, because the Streets are *clearer* and not so *incommoded* as at other times. Besides, *London* is at no time of the Year so *thinly* peopl'd (God be thanked) but

but a Man, with a little *Industry*, may find Company enough of *both Sexes*, to the ruine of his *Health* and Consumption of his *Estate*. But this is not all, a universal Spirit of *Civility* reigns over all the Town; the *Tradesmen* are more confiding, and the *Harlots* better natur'd.

A Vintner, who, in the hurry of *Michaelmas-Term*, is as difficult of access as a Privy-councillor, will now give you his Company for asking, and perhaps club his Bottle in to the Bargain; and the very individual Damsel, with whom a Month or two hence, nothing below a *Senator* will go down, or at least a Man that will bribe as deep, is now so humbled by the *Emptiness* of the Town, that for the *Credit* of being carried in a *Coach* to her Lodgings, and the Expence of a Bottle of *Wine*, to treat her Landlady, she will put on a clean Smock to oblige you, without so much as exacting Money to pay the Landress.

I cou'd say a thousand things more in behalf of the *Vacation*, but I shall content my self at present, with observing, that it produces *Bartholomew-Fair*; and when I have said that, I think it needs no farther Panegyrick. If Antiquity carries any weight with it, the *Fair* has enough to say for it self on that *Head*. Fourscore Years ago,

and better, it afforded *Matter* enough for one of our best *Comedians* to Compose a Play upon it: But *Smithfield* is another sort of a Place now to what it was in the Times of *Honest Ben*; who, were he to rise out of his Grave, wou'd hardly believe it to be the same numerical spot of ground where *Justice Over-do* made so busie a Figure, where the *Crop-ear'd Parson* demolish'd a *Ginger-bread Stall*, where *Nightingale* of harmonious memory sung *Balads*, and fat *Ursula* sold *Pig* and bottled *Ale*.

As I have observ'd to you, this noble *Fair* is quite another thing than what it was in the last Age; It not only deals in the humble Stories of *Crispin* and *Crispianus*, *Whittington's Cat*, *Bateman's Ghost*, with the merry Conceits of the little *Pickle-herring*; it produces *Opera's* of its own growth, and is become a formidable Rival to both the Theaters. It beholds *Gods* descending from *Machines*, who express themselves in a Language suitable to their Dignity: It trafficks in *Heroes*, it raises *Ghosts* and *Apparitions*; it has represented the *Trojan Horse*, the Workmanship of the divine *Epeus*; it has seen *St. George* encounter the *Dragon*, and overcome him. In short, for *Thunder* and *Lightning*, for *Songs* and *Dances*, for *sublime Fustian* and *magnificent Non-sence*,

sence, it comes not short of *Drury-Lane* or *Lincolns-inn-Fields*. But, to leave off this Bombast, with which the *Booths* have infected me, and deliver my self in a more familiar Stile, you are to know, that, at this present Writing, your humble Servant is in a *Musick-Booth*; yet, though he is distracted with a thousand Noises and Objects, as a *Maid* whirling round with a dozen *Rapiers* at her Neck, a Dance of *Chimney-sweepers*, and a *Fellow* standing on his Head on the top of a *Quart-pot*, he has both Leisure and Patience enough to Write to you.

Smithfield had always the Reputation of being a Place of *Persecution*, with this difference, that the *Women* do that in this Age which the *Priests* did in the last, and make as many poor Sinners suffer by *Fire*.

Cheap-side Cits come to see horned Beasts brought hither from all Parts of the World, when they might behold the very same *Monsters* at home, if they wou'd but be at the pains of consulting their own *Looking-glasses*: Our pious *Reformers* have been long endeavouring to put down this Nursery of *Wickedness* and *Irreligion*, as they call it; but the beloved *Wives* of their own Bosoms, and their vertuous *Daughters*, better understand their own *Interest*, than to lose any Opportunity of getting abroad

and planting *Cuckoldom* or *Fornication*, as their *Mothers* did before them.

Certainly no Place sets Mankind more upon a level than *Smithfield* does; *Lords* and *Bellows-menders*, *Beaux* and *Fleaers* of dead *Horses*, *Colonels* and *Foot-soldiers*, *Bauds* and *Women of Vertue*, walk Cheek by Jole in the *Cloisters*, and jostle one another by Candle-light, as familiarly as *Nat Lee's* Gods in *Oedipus* jostle one another in the dark. The poor *Vizard-masks* suffer most unmercifully, for no-sooner can they show their Heads within this blessed Place of all freedom and no quarter, but away they are hurried into a corner, and a hundred several hands are about them at once, to examine whether they carry any *Contraband* Goods about them.

The Woman and her Children in the *Maccabees*, that chose rather to part with their lives, than pollute themselves with *Swines-flesh*, wou'd have died ten Thousand Deaths, rather than have touched the Ear of a *Smithfield* Pig, with a thousand of *Prince Moloch's* pagan Subjects floating in the Sauce about him. But perhaps our vertuous Citizens swallow *Pig* and *Pork* so earnestly, to shew their Aversion to *Judaism*; as the learned Mr. *Selden* I remember, somewhere tells us in his *Table-talk*,
that

that for the very same reason our Ancestors were wont to provide *Gammons* of Bacon against *Easter*, which godly custom their posterity keep up to this Day.

So much may suffice at present, for I am just now going to a *Puppet-show* to see the *Creation of the World* and *Noah's Flood*, which will give me more Satisfaction, I don't question, than *Dr. Woodward's Hypothesis*, *Mr. Whiston's Theory*, or any new System of our modern *Vertuoso's*.

I am your most humble Servant.

To the same upon the breaking up of Bartholomew-fair.

Dear Sir,

Sept. 12. 99.

THe Glory is departed from *Smithfield*, and Love and Intrigues have left the Cloisters; in short, *Bartholomew-fair* is over, *Et voila, mon Ami, les miserables Effets d'une si grande Revolution.*

Those very individual *Persons*, who, two Days ago, glitter'd in *Imperial Tinsel*, govern'd *Kingdoms* in Imagination, commanded *Legions*, and talk'd sublime *Heroic*

roic in Tragic *Buskins*; those very Persons, I say, who put the *Sun* out of Countenance in his *double* Capacity, both as the God of Poetry, and the Governor of the Day, who, *out-shone* him at Noon with their brighter *Bristol* stones, and *out metaphor'd* all *Parnassus* in their *Opera's*; Those very persons, I say, who commanded Respect from the inferior *Mobb*, and drew the Eyes of the *whole City*, more than a *Lord-Mayor* at a *Publick Cavalcade*:

—— *Quis talia fando, (Ulyssis,*
Myrmidonum, Dolopum-ve, aut duri miles
Temporet à lachrymis?

Are now, by a most *wonderful* Revolution of Fate, *divested* of all their Splendour and Magnificence. Their *Troops*, their *Armies*, nay, their very *Guards* have deserted them; they are now *reduced* to the *common* Obscurity of Mankind; instead of the most *exquisite* Wine, that used to *Crown* their Glasses, we find them *burying* the Regret of their lost *Sovereignty* in humble *Flip*, or more humble *Anniseed*; and are glad to be trusted for a Dinner at a *Boiling-cook's*, and snore contentedly in a *Garret*.

And those charming *Dulcibella's*, who, by the unparallell'd *Lustre* of their Eyes, forced

forced *Monarchs* to lay their *Scepters* at their Feet, who had the disposal of Kingdoms and *Dominions*, who stole away the *Hearts* of all Beholders, and, when ever they pleas'd, drew either *Admiration* or *Pity* from the Spectators, are now, by their like *Inconstancy* of Fortune, oblig'd to return to the *Privacies* of a less pompous Life. They whom Yesterday's Sun beheld so majestically severe, that they refused a gracious Smile to prostrate Princes;

*Nunc in quadriuiis, & angiportis,
Glubunt magnanimos Bruti nepotes.*

Are now glad to dispence the last Favours for no higher a Bribe than a *Silver-thimble*, and a *double-guilt Brass-ring*: In the Day-time, they foot Stockings, wash Foot-mens Socks, and repair the Breaches of old *Lace*, and *Muslin*, regale themselves with a Pint of *Milk* at Noon, and *Gray-pease* at Night, trudge it on Foot from *Charing-cross* to the *Change*, and with their officious Elbows remind all the Passers by of their desolate Condition: In fine, They, who so lately commanded the whole *Universe*, are under perpetual Alarms from *Watch-men*, *Constables*, and the savage Justice's Clerk; and as an Ancient Author, who lived in *William Rufus's* time has it.

In

*In midnight Cellars now they Ply,
For two pence wet, and two pence Dry,
But though Bartholomew-fair be dead, and
buried for a Twelvemonth, yet, it is some
Consolation to us, that it revives in both the
Play-houses. Poetry is so little regarded
there, and the Audience is so taken up with
Show and Sight, that an Author need not
much trouble himself about his thoughts
and Language, so he is but in fee with the
Dancing-masters, and has a few luscious Songs
to lard his dry Composition. One wou'd
almost swear, that Smithfield had removed
into Drury-lane, and Lincolns-Inn-fields,
since they set so small a Value on good
Sence, and so great a one on Trifles that
have no Relation to the Play. By the by,
I am to tell you, that some of their late Bills
are so very monstrous, that neither we, nor
our Fore-fathers, ever knew any thing like
them. They are as long as the Title Pages
to some of Mr. Prin's Works, nay, you
may much sooner dispatch the Gazette,
even when it is most crowded with Ad-
vertisements. And as their Bills are prodi-
gious, so are the Entertainments they present
us with. For not to mention the Bohemi-
an Women that first taught us how to dance
and*

and swim together; nor the famous Mr. Clinch of Barnet with his Kit and Organ; nor the worthy Gentleman that condescended to dance a *Cheshire*-round at the instance of several persons of Quality; nor t'other worthy Gentleman that Sung like a Turkey Cock; nor lastly that prodigy of a man that diverted the Boxes so much with my Ladies Birthday, and so dexterously Mimick'd the Harmony of the *Essex Lyons*; not to mention these and a hundred other notable curiosities, we have been so unmercifully overrun with an inundation of *Messieurs* from Paris, that one would be almost tempted to wish that the War had still continued, if it were for no other reason but because it would have prevented the coming over of these light-heel'd Gentlemen, who have been a greater Plague to our Theaters, than their Privateers were to our Merchant-men. Shortly, I suppose we shall be entertained here with all sorts of Sights and Shows, as, Jumping through a Hoop; (for why should not that be as proper as Mr. Sympson's Vaulting upon the Wooden horse,) Dancing upon the high Ropes, Leaping over eight Mens Heads, Wrestling, Boxing, Cudgeling, Fighting at Back-sword, Quarter-staff, Bear-baiting, and all the other noble Exercises, that divert the good Folks at Hockley,
for

for when once such an *infection* as this has gain'd ground upon us, who can tell where it will *Stop*?

What a wretched Pass is this *wicked Age* come to, when *Ben Johnson*, and *Shakespeare* won't relish, without these *Bagatelles* to recommend them, and nothing but *Farce* and *Grimace* will go down? For my part, I wonder they have not incorporated *Parson Bu—ess* into their *Society*, for after the *Auditors* are *stupidified* with a dull Scene, or so, he wou'd make a shift to *relieve* them: In short, *Mr. Collier* may save himself the *trouble* of writing against the *Theatre*, for, if these *lewd Practices* are not laid *aside*, and *Sence* and *Wit* don't come into *play* again, a Man may easily *foretel*, without pretending to the Gift of *Prophecy*, that the Stage will be *short-liv'd*, and the strong *Kentish Man* will take Possession of the *two Play-houses*, as he has already done of that in *Dorset-garden*. I am

Your humble Servant.

P. S. The strong *Kentish Man* (of whom you have heard so many Stories) has as I told you above, taken up his *quarters* in *Dorset-garden*; and how they'll get him out again

again the Lord knows, for he threatens to thrash all the Poets, if they pretend to disturb him. Mr. *Joseph Haines*, was his Master of the Ceremonies, and introduced him in a Prologue upon the Stage; and indeed who so fit to do it, as this Person, whose Breath is as *strong*, as the *Kentish Man's* Back? I don't doubt, but that several of the Ladies, who saw this Prodigy of a Man, long'd to try a *Fall* with him in Private, like the Woman in *Ovid*, that was desirous to lie with *Hercules*, for no other merit but that of his Strength. Her words, unless my Memory fails me, were these,

—— *Subiit me magna cupido,
Ferre virum, tulerat qui prius ipse polum.*

And to convince you that I have not Slandered the fair Sex, I have sent you inclosed the following Letter, which was written by a certain *Countess* that shall be nameless, dropt by her Foot-man in the *Pall-mall*, and taken up by a Chairman. At present 'tis all the talk of the Town, and every *Chocolate-house* rings of it.

To

To William Joy, the strong Kentish-
man.

S I R,

I Saw you Yesterday, with satisfaction, exerting your *Parts* in *Dorset-garden*; on that very *Theatre* where I have frequently beheld the *Alexanders*, the *Cæsars*, the *Hercules*, the *Almanzors*, the greatest Heroes of *Greece* or *Italy*, of ancient or modern Times, taking *Towns*, sacking *Cities*, overturning *Empires*, singly routing whole *Armies*, but yet performing less *Wonders* than You. Yet, I must tell you, it grieves me to see so *Noble* a *Talent* mis-employed, and that *Strength* thrown away upon undeserving *Horses*, that cannot reward your *Labour*, which might much better divert the requiting *Woman*. Meet me therefore, thou *puissant Man*, in another *Garden*, on a *better Theatre*, where you may employ your *Abilities* with more *Profit* to *Your self*, and *Satisfaction* to the expecting

MELESINDA.

A

by Mr. Brown.

111

*A Consolatory Letter to my Lady-----
upon the Death of her Husband.*

Madam,

I Was very much *surprized* to hear that your Ladyship takes so much to *Heart*, the Loss of your Husband; that your Relations should not be able to *Conquer* so obstinate a *Grief*, or that a Person of your good *Sence* and *Resolution*, should be so *unfashionable* and so *weak*, as to pay that *Respect* to the *Ashes* of the *Dead*, which well-bred Women now-a-days can scarce afford to the *Living*.

I will not pretend to *attack* your *Grief* in the *common* Forms, I will not represent to you, that *all Flesh is Grass*, that nothing is *exempt* from the *Laws of Fate*, and that 'tis in *vain* to *regret* a *Loss*, which it was not in our power to *prevent*; these *threadbare* Topicks I shall leave to *Divines* and *Philosophers*, and shall *content* my self, to *oppose* your *Lamentations*, with *Arguments* *better* suited to your *present* Condition.

'Tis true, *Madam*, you have *lost* a *Husband*, and what of that? have not *Thousands* *done* so before you? but then consider, that his *Death* makes room for a

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new

new *Election*. A Widow ought no more to afflict her self for the Death of her Husband, than a *Country Corporation* is obliged to go into *Mourning* for the Death of the *Member* that represented 'em in *Parliament*; for without staying for a Writ from the *Clark* of the *Crown*, she may proceed to a new Choice as soon as she sees convenient. Your *Husband*, God be thank'd, has neither carried your *Youth* with him into the other World, nor your *Joynture*; cou'd he have robb'd you of either of those *Blessings*, you might have just Reason to complain; but I think a Woman's Condition is not very desperate, when her two surest Friends, her *Beauty* and her *Wealth* stick close to her.

As you have *Charms*, and *Money* enough to procure you store of *Lovers*, so in my Opinion, it must needs be an agreeable Diversion to you in your present *Sorrow*, (for I will allow you, Madam, to keep up the *Appearance* of it) to observe the different *Address* and *Language* of your Admirers.

One will tell you, that he adores the Perfections of your *Soul*, exclusive of all *Worldly Considerations*; but, Madam, have a care of these *Platonicks*, for a Man that makes *vigorous Court* to the *Body*, is worth a Thousand *Coxcombs*, that pretend I know not what mighty kindness to the *Soul*.

Another

Another will tell you, that he is ready to *hang* or *drown* for your Sake, and desires you to chuse what sort of *Death* for him you think fit, if you deny him that *Blessing*, wherein his Life can be only *happy*. Be govern'd by me, Madam, and take such a Lover at his *Word*; if he *decently* dispatch himself, you may take it from me, that he *lov'd* in earnest, but if he *fails* to give you this Testimony of his *Affection*, you may conclude he was a *Hypocrite*, and consequently not worth the saving.

A third perhaps will boast of his *Acres*, and tell you what a large *Settlement* he will make you; whatever you do, pray take care of these *Smithfield Gentlemen*, these Land and Tenement-Panders, for not one in a Thousand is *honest* at bottom. And if he can but *joyn* your Estate to his, never troubles his head about the more comfortable *Conjunction* of Persons and Affections.

It will be a *pleasant* Amusement for you, to manage these Humble Servants so *artificially*, as to make all of 'em *hope*; yet, at the same time *jealous* of one another, to steal a *kind* Glance sometimes at one, and bestow a *gracious* Nod sometimes upon another, to see them *languish* at your Feet, and hear the *different* turns of their Rhetorick;

then after you have thoroughly examined their *several* Merits and Qualifications, 'twill be high time to proceed in your Choice. But whenever you go about that, Madam, let me advise you to observe the same Policy, as the *Cardinals* do at the Election of a *Pope*, and pitch upon one, who, in all probability, is soonest like to make a *sede vacante*. Thus, Madam, instead of dwelling upon the *Illustrious Qualities* of the *Defunct*, according to the *thread-bare* Method of *common* Comforters, I have made bold to lay down before you the Measures you are to take with the *Living*. I confess I have ventur'd upon a Task for which I am no ways qualified: *Solomon* has told us, 'That the Hearts of *Kings* are *unsearchable*; which, I suppose, he knew to be so by his own; he might have added, when his Hand was in, 'That the Hearts of Widows have the same *occult* Quality, and are as hard to be *understood*. Thus, Madam, you are not to *wonder*, if the Directions I have given you, are none of the properest, however, such as you see 'em, they are at your Service, as is likewise,

Madam,

Your most Obedient and Faithful, &c.

To

To Walter Knight, Esq; at Ruscomb
in Berkshire.

Being a Relation of a Journey to London.

Sir,

YOU are earnest to know how I got to Town, and what Adventures I met upon the Road. Since you can *condescend* to entertain your self with *Trifles* of this Nature, be pleased to take them as they follow:

As soon as I came to *Reading*, I sent the Man of the House, where I lay that Night, to enquire what Places were taken in the Coach; who brought me word, that only one Place was taken, and that for a Woman. I presently represented to my self some *Maid*, *Wife*, or *Widow* of Nineteen, with black roguish *Eyes*, cherry *Cheeks*, narrow *Mouth*, swelling *Breasts* and a *Breath* as sweet as *Violets*. I thanked my kind Stars for this *favourable* Opportunity, and with these *Pleasant* Imaginations passed away the Night very agreeably. Next Morning, full of these charming *Idea's*, I made hast to the Inn where the Coach lay: But, good Heavens! no sooner did I peep

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within

within the leathern Machine, but I found my self the most lamentably disappointed that ever poor Sinner was. Instead of the *Beauty* I had represented to my self, behold there was an *old Gentlewoman* with formidable *Whiskers*, her *Nose* and *Chin* as ready to meet as the two Ends of a Half-moon, and a *dismal Forehead-cloth* in to the Bargain, to cool my Courage. A Man of more Piety than my self wou'd have thanked Heaven for being so favourable to him, and securing him from a Temptation; but I'faith, I cou'd not find in my Heart to do it. Into the Coach I stept, but with as much Regret on my side, as a Citizen, that has *bribed* deep to get himself elected in a Country Borough, is turned out of the *House*, and, without so much as bidding her Ladiship Good-morrow, I compos'd my self to *sleep* as well as I cou'd; and, being pretty well *prepared* for it, by what I had been *doing* the Night before, slept ten Miles perpendicular, without the least interruption, till we came to *Maidenhead*.

Here we took up a *Captain*, and two *Gentlemen* besides. The Captain was one of the most agreeable Companions that ever could have aton'd for my former Disappointment: He had been in the Service ever since the famous Campaigns at *Hounslow*, since which
he

he had seen most of the Action in *Scotland*, *Ireland*, and *Flanders*. Our Conversation at first ran upon *Politicks*: and we talked very judiciously of the Miscarriages of the War. *Religion* succeeded to that Discourse; and, when we were *weary* of that Subject, as indeed none of us had *much* to say to it, by one unanimous Consent, we fell upon *Women*. The Captain, who, as I told you before, was a Man of *Wit* and *Pleasantry*, diverted us *extreamly* upon this Argument: He told us, that as other Gentlemen devoted their Time to *Geometry* or *Musick*, or any thing else which they fancied, he had made it his *particular* Business to study *Women*, and had arrived to so great a *Perfection* in this noble Science, that, after the first *Interview*, he cou'd as certainly tell how many Days a *Woman* wou'd *hold out*, and when she wou'd *deliver*, as Monsieur *Vauban* cou'd tell when any *Town* wou'd *surrender*.

I compare, says he, a *Woman* to a *Fortification*; In the first place, because it is in my *own* Way; and like *Tully's* Fidler, that defined the Soul to be Harmony, a Man always ought to borrow his Metaphors from his own Profession. And, secondly, because there's the greatest *Resemblance* in the World between them. There's no *Fortifi-*

cation so strong, nor no *Woman* so vertuous, but, by open *Force* or *Stratagem*, may be made to *Yield*. The World is at liberty to say what it pleases; but I positively maintain, that every *Woman* is to be taken: she is either to be undermin'd by *Flattery*, or won by *Bribery*, which we *Military Men* call *Capitulation*, or else (but it does not happen once in a hundred Years) to be managed by downright *Strength*, which the Learned in *Mathematicks* call taking the Town by *Storm*. Now all the *Art* lies to know how to employ these different Expedients. Some Ladies will be flatter'd into *Love*, whom all the Bribes that stir about *Westminster-Hall* in a *Sessions* can never move: And others, by far the greatest part of the Sex, are to be managed by *Money*, who have too much Discretion to be Imposed upon by *Flattery*. And there are others too great for *Bribery*, and insensible to all the *Flattery* in the World, that must be vanquished by *Force*. Tho' their Inclinations, Gentlemen, are as rampant as yours, nay perhaps fiercer, yet they wou'd seem to be forced; they think 'tis some Excuse for their *Infirmity*, and quarrel with you after you have obliged them. In the heat of my Discourse, I have omitted one thing, which never fails, when all other Artifices

Artifices *miscarry*, and that is the pretending to be *Religious*. It gives a Man the Character of being *Silent* and *Circumspect*, which is *all in all* with the Ladies, and I have found it so by experience.

It was my Fortune, Gentlemen, about some eight Years ago, to be quarter'd upon an *Elder*, when some of our Troops were in *Scotland*: His Wife, as to her Beauty, was but indifferent, but she was *young*, and she belonged to the *Kirk*, which were two extraordinary Temptations, especially the latter. I offer'd her half a *Piece*, which was a *Sum* big enough in that Country, to have *corrupted* all the *Ministry*, but cou'd not prevail. Then I laid out all my Stock of *Rhetorick* upon her, and made a *Goddeſs* of this *Coquette*, but to as little effect as before. At last it came into my Head to speak well of the *Covenant*, and rail at the *Bishops*, after which, to my no little surprize, I found her *communicative* enough of her Person.

In short, Gentlemen, I have *tried* all the Tricks in the World, and find, by long Experience, that *Flattery* does more than *sincere Dealing* with them, and *Wine* more than *Flattery*, *Money* more than that, and *Religion*, I mean the *Pretence* of it, more than *Flattery*, *Wine*, and *Money*, put together.

ther. This you may take for granted, when you have beaten a Woman's *Pride* and *Honour* out of the Field, and she has nothing but her *precious Soul* to capitulate for, that *Body*, and *all*, are in a fair way of being yours: for *Spinosa* and *Vanninus* never made a quarter so many *Atheists*, as *Love*.

Since I am upon this *Argument*, Gentlemen, and we have nothing else to *talk* of, give me leave to tell you a short *Story* relating to this *Affair*: The Scene lies in *Wales*, or the Borders of it, I won't be positive, but I dare swear it will divert you for want of something better:

In the *Country* above-mentioned lives a *Family*, very remarkable for their *Godliness*, by the same token that they always kept three or four *Presbyterian Divines*, with as many young *Cubs* of the *Schism*, to keep the House in due Order. From Morning to Night there was nothing but *Exhortation*, and *Use*, and *Application* to be heard within the Walls. The *Cook* exhorted the *Butler*, the *Groom* gave *Spiritual Advice* to the *Gardiner*: Nay, the *Kitchen-Wench* and *Turnspit-Boy* would spoil my *Lady's Dinner*, to settle the grand Point of *Predestination*. Yet, amidst all this *Whining* and *Praying*, and *Singing of Psalms*, the *Devil*, who
owed

owed the Family a Grudge, for making this *Mock-War* against him, seduced my *Lady's Praying-Gentlewoman* to commit Acts of Wickedness with one of the *Knight's Praying-Footmen*: This zealous Pair managed their Affairs with so little Discretion, that their Amour came to be discovered by some of their Fellow-Servants; but godly People, you know, think themselves above Scandal. At last, word was brought to the old Lady, that they were actually in Bed. At the first she cou'd not believe the News, for how durst *Satan* be so impudent, as to put his nasty Cloven-Foot within her Threshold? But finding it confirmed by a Cloud of Witnesses, she went to the Scene of Leudness, taking with her a *Smith*, and a *Nonconformist Parson*; one to break open the Door in case of Opposition; the other to rouse up their Consciences in case of Impenitency. Upon the first Alarm that my Lady gave them, the Lovers wou'd not answer; but when they found the *Smith* began to fall to work with the Door in good earnest, the *Footman* got up and open'd it. The old Lady cou'd hardly forbear striking them, so much was her Holy Spleen provoked at the Profanation of her House: But she thunder'd out Judgments plentifully against them, and the Divine, that was with

with her, did the same, but especially to the *Trespassing* Damofel, though his *Eyes* gave his *Tongue* the *Lye*, all the while he *reprimanded* her. In short, the *Footman* had his *Livery* *stript* over his *Ears*, and the poor *Wench* was sent *Home* to her *Relations*, by the same token that she attempted to *drown* her self by the way.

This *godly* Family was in a strange *Disorder* to be defiled thus with *Fornication*; and the Master of it being then in *London*, his Lady sent him an Account of this unhappy Accident, withal desiring his Advice to know what must be done upon this Occasion. He order'd the *Bed*, upon which this wicked *Action* had been committed, to be carried out of the *Gates* of the *House*, and there to be *burnt*. On the Day when this was put in *Execution*, the discarded *Footman* chanced to come by, as *Fire* was set to the *offending* Materials, and being told the reason of it, My Master, says he, might have let this *Bone-fire* *alone*; for, to my *Knowledge*, if he's resolved to *punish* in this manner every *Bed* or *Chair* that has been accessary to *Fornication*, there's ne're a *Bed* or *Chair* in the *House* can 'scape him.

The *Captain* had just made an end of his *Story* as the *Coach* was got upon the *Stones*. I took my leave of the *Company* in the
Hay-

Hay-market, being obliged, as you know, to visit Mr. Brown; by whom I find, that there's no stirring for me out of Town this Month or two. This is a sensible *mortification* to me, for whereas I had flatter'd my self that I should pass the winter with you in one of the best *Airs* in *Berkshire*, I must now do Penance in everlasting Fog and Smoke, which is my aversion of all aversions. The onely *relief* I can propose to my self, is to *converse* with you by way of *Letters* as often as I can, and by that means to fancy my self at *Ruscomb*. So that when any thing remarkable happens here, you may *depend* to have an account of it, from, Sir,

Lond. Octob.

15. 99.

Your most humble and most
obliged, &c.

A Love Letter from an Officer in the Army, to a Widow, whom he was desperately in Love with, before he saw her.

THough I never had the Happiness to see you, no, not so much as in a *Picture*, and consequently can no more tell, what *Complexion* you are of, than he that lives

lives in the *remotest* part of *China*; yet, Madam, I am fallen passionately in *Love* with you, and this *Affection* has taken so deep root in me, that in my *Conscience* I cou'd die a *Martyr* for you, with as much *Alacrity*, as thousands have done for their *Religion*; though they knew as little of the *Truth*, for which they dy'd, as I do of your *Ladiship*.

This may *surprize* you, Madam, but you'll cease to *wonder*, when I shall inform you what it was, that not only gave Birth to my passion, but has so effectually confirm'd it. Last Week, riding into the *Country* about my lawful Affairs, it was my Fortune to see a most magnificent *Seat* upon the Road; this excited my *Curiosity* to enquire after the *Owner* of so beautiful a *Pile*; and being told that it belong'd to your *Ladiship*, I began that very Moment to have a strange *Inclination* for you: but when I was farther informed, that some two *thousand* Acres of the *best* Land in *England*, belong'd to this noble *Fabrick*, together with a fine *Park*, variety of *Fish-ponds*, and such like *Conveniences*; I then fell up to the Ears in *Love*, and submitted to a *power*, which I could not resist.

Thought I to my self, the *Owner* of so many agreeable Things, must needs be the most

most *charming* Lady in the Universe: What tho' she be *old*, her Trees are *green*? What tho' she has lost all the Roses in her *Cheeks*, she has enough in her *Gardens*? What signifies it though she be *barren*, since her Acres are *fruitful*? With these Thoughts, I lighted from my Horse, and on the sudden fell so *inamour'd* with your Ladiship, that I told my *Passion* to every Tree in your Park, which, by the by, are the tallest, straitest, loveliest, finest shaped Trees I ever saw; and I have since wore out above two dozen *Pen-knives*, in *Engravening* your Name upon their Barks.

I will now *appeal* to your Ladiship, whether any *Lover*, ever went upon more *solid* Motives than my self. Those that chuse a *Mistress* wholly for her *Beauty*, will infallibly find their *Passion decay* with that; those that pretend to admire a Woman for the *Qualities* of her *Mind*, are guilty of a piece of *Pagan* superstition, long since worn thread-bare by *Plato* and his Disciples; for he that loves not a Fair Lady for the *Flesh*, as well as the *Spirit*, is only fit, in my Opinion, to make his Court to a *Spectre*; whereas Madam, you need not question the *Sincerity* of my *Passion* which is built upon the same *Foundation* with your House, grows with your Trees, and will daily *increase* with your *Estate*:
For

For all I know to the contrary, your Ladyship may be the *handsomest* Woman in the World; but whether you are or no, signifies not a Farthing, while you have Money enough to set you off, though you were ten times more forbidding than the present red-nosed Countess of —, and ten times older than the famous Countess of *Desmond*. I am a *Soldier* by my *Profession*, and as I fought for *Pay*, so with *Heaven's* Blessing, I design to love for *Pay*; All your other *Suitors* would speak the same *Language* to you, were they as *honest* as my self; This I will tell you for your *Comfort*, *Madam*, that if you pitch upon me, you'll be the *first* Widow upon Record, from the *Creation* of the World, to this present *Hour*, that ever chose a Man for telling her the Truth. I am

Your most *Passionate*, &c.

To

by Mr. Brown.

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To Sir W. S.—.

Upon the two incomparable Poems, the Satyr
against Wit, and the Poetæ Britannici.

Jan. 8.

I Have, according to your Order, sent
you down by the *Canterbury Coach*, the
Satyr against Wit, and the *Poetæ Britannici*,
two incomparable Pieces in their Kind, and
which will certainly give you a great deal
of Diversion, if you are to be diverted by
Dullness and *Defamation*, or what is as bad
as *Defamation*, by *vile, lowly Panegyric*.
The former of these two Poems came, like
Melchisedeck into the World, without *Fa-*
ther or *Mother*; I mean the *Author*, for sever-
al *Reasons* best known to himself, has not
thought fit to set his *Name* before it: How-
ever, he is not so *conceal'd* as he fancies him-
self; for if there is any certainty in *Physiog-*
nomy, or the Child to be known by the re-
sembling the Features of his *Father*, as they
say the *Austrian* Family are by the *Lip*, it
was undoubtedly written by the *City Bard*,
the same worthy Gentleman, who about
three *Years* ago lampoon'd *K. William* in an
Heroic Poem, by the same Token, that he

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was

was *Knighted* for it. I have been told he has disown'd the *Bastard* in several Companies, but that won't serve his turn: The *Grand Jury* at *Will's* have found the *Bill* against him; so now he must e'en take the *Brat* home, and bring it up in its *Father's Religion*, I mean, in *Hypocrisie* and *Backbiting*. A Friend of mine t'other Day, said a very pleasant thing, methought upon this Occasion, a *Satyr* against *Wit*; that is, says he, a *Satyr* against every individual *Subject* King *William* has in his *Dominions*, for there's never a Man between *St. Michael's Mount*, in *Cornwal*, and *Barwick upon Tweed*, but thinks himself a *Wit*, whatever the World may think of him; nay, I dare engage that our *Author* himself, for all his *Aversion* to *Wit*, does not believe his *Satyr* to be without it. 'Tis the most fantastical Mixture of *Hypocrisie* and *Scandal* you ever saw: The *Writer* of it sets up for an *Advocate* of *Religion* which he shews by his *Scurrility*, and want of good *Manners*; and pretends that a *Confederacy* is carrying on in *Covent-Garden*, to Banish *that* and *Learning* out of the World. By the terrible Description he makes of some People, one wou'd be apt to think that the *Goths* and *Vandals*, who have been buried under Ground for so many hundred
Ages,

Ages, were newly *sprung* up in *Russel-street*, and going with Fire and Faggot in hand to set all our Libraries in Ashes; and when that was done, to knock all the *Parsons* on the Head, and ravish all the *Women* between *White-Hall* and *White-Chapel*. But Dr. Oates's forty thousand *Pilgrims*, with their *Black Bills*, and so forth, don't smell so rank of the *Legend*. All the Reason I know he has to make this *hideous* Out-cry, is, because the *Dispensary* has made bold to expose the *rambling Fustian* of his two *Artists*, and some honest Gentlemen, that now and then use to *drink a Dish of Tea at Will's*, have been guilty of speaking the same truth. A strange thing this! that a Man must be an *Atheist*, only for calling *Dullness* by its proper Name, and a *Rake*, because he has too much *Honesty* to Flatter one of the most execrable *Poems*, that has plagu'd the World since the Days of *Quarles* and *Ogilby*. As I told you before, the Author of this incomparable *Satyr* has been pleased to disown it; but he has acknowledged enough to do his Business. He has own'd to a *Person* of the *indelible* Character, who complimented him upon the Writing of it, and told him, that an *indelible* Mark was stamped upon all his Works, that indeed he *Corrected* and Re-

vised, but did not *Write* it: Had any one but himself been desired to *Correct* it, he wou'd have done it by whole-sale with *Martial's Una litura*. However, this is enough in all Conscience, for next to the Scandal of Writing such a confounded *Satyr*, that of *Correcting* and *Revising* it, deserves the next place. But in *Satyr* and *Murder*, there's no such thing as *Accessories*, but every Man is a *Principal*. It wou'd look like too Solemn a Confutation of such *Ribaldry*, to say that the *Gentlemen*, whom he has abused, have improved and cultivated our Tongue, have obliged the World with several Works that will be read with *Admiration*, and remembered with *Gratitude*, when his are forgotten; that they think it no Disgrace to their *Learning*, to accompany it with good *Manners*; that they know when to unbend themselves to *Pleasure*, and when to apply to *Business*; that they don't affect a *Gravity* which after all becomes none but *mysterious Block-heads*, nor show their *Morals*, by *censuring* those of their Neighbours: I say, it would look too *solemn*, to say any thing like this in their *Justification*, since not only their own *Works* speak for them, but they are sufficiently *commended*, by being made the *Heroes* of his Libel. Among other

other *merry* Doctrines he advances, he tells the World, that 'tis impossible for a Man to be a *Wit*, and not a *Rake*; this I suppose he calculated for the Meridian of *Cheapside*, and for the Consolation of his *City-Friends*, whom all the *World* will clear from the Imputation of being *Wits*: and yet, with all due Respect to my *Lord-Mayor* and *Aldermen* be it spoken, I believe there are as many of that Character within the *City-Walls*, as there are in *Covent-Garden*, and stupid senseless *Coxcombs* too, that discredit *Pleasure*, and Murder *that* which was design'd to enliven *Conversation*. He principally levels his Indignation at Mr. *Dryden*, and among other Sins, taxes him with *Flattery*. If Flattery is to be *Pardon'd* in any sort of Men, it certainly ought to be in the *Poets*; but for my part, I don't think them more *guilty* of it, than the *rest* of Mankind, who all agree to make their Court to *Wealth* and *Greatness*; and if it is a Sin to *flatter* Greatness, they do neither better nor worse than all the *World*, who, perhaps, have not the *same* Excuse. If a man were minded to be ill-natur'd, he might easily turn the *Tables* upon the *Church*, and show that the *Parsons* have *flatter'd* as much as the *Poets*. If the Latter in their Epistles Dedicatory

bestow *Wit* and *Learning* upon *Block-heads*, the Former have bestowed *Grace*, and the Lord knows how many *Christian Virtues* upon those that never possess'd them. What makes it look worse in the *Parsons* than the *Poets* is this, that these are privileged by their Function, whereas the former are Men of Grimace, and ought to abominate the least appearance of *Falsehood*, as much as they do *Non-payment* of Tithes. But 'tis a Jest, that the *City Bard* should fall foul upon any one for *Flattery*; he that has been guilty of the grossest, vilest *Flattery* imaginable, and prostituted the Dignity of an *Epic Poem*, more than any one before him. An *Epic Poem* is a noble magnificent Composition; the chief End of it is to excite Men to Virtue, by celebrating illustrious Examples, and proposing them to Imitation. 'Tis a Publick Building, like that of a *Temple*, or a *Town-Hall*; now as a Man that designs to build any such *Structure*, if he intends to *adorn* it with Statues, ought to set up those of *celebrated Men*, of *Kings*, or *Princes*, or *Bishops*, and not his *Barber's* because he *Trims* him well, or his *Shoemaker's*, because he has got the Length of his Foot: So in an *Epic Poem*, an Author should *only* introduce Men of *Figure* into his

his Work, and not throw away his *Incense* upon *mean* or *obscure* Persons, merely because they are his *Friends*, and now and then drink a Glass of Wine with him at the *Three Tuns* upon *Ludgate-Hill*. Yet the Author of the *Two Arthurs*, has not only done this, but has (to his Immortal Credit be it spoken) introduced *Satyr* into an *Epic Poem*, which no one has done before him, and I dare swear no one will ever attempt it after him, except such a sordid Imitator, as he that has *Burlesqued* our *Saviour* in *Heroick*. And Copies the *Faults* of all the Authors he reads, instead of imitating their *Virtues*. But to return to our *Satyr*ist:

You and I, and every Body has been charm'd with the Honourable Mr. *Boyle's* Answer to a stiff haughty *Grammarian* that shall be nameless, but is known well enough. Never did Wit and Learning Triumph so gloriously over Dullness and Pedantry, as in that noble Book; and never was any Argument managed with that Variety of Learning, and those agreeable *Turns* of *Wit*. Accordingly it found a kind Reception not only in *England*, but *abroad*. The *Foreign Journals*, gave it the Commendation it deserved, and all the *Polite Judges*

in Europe were pleased to see an *Arrogant Pedant*, that had been crouding his Head twenty Years together with the Spoils of *Lexicons* and *Dictionaries*, worsted and foiled by a *Young Gentleman*, upon his own *Dunghil*; and by his own *Criticisms*. Thus one would have thought that Mr. Boyle's Merit and Quality would have secured him from any *scurrilous* Treatment; and that his *Enemies*, if he could have any such, wou'd be content to *Envy* him in Private, and never have the Impudence to *Attack* him in Publick. And yet the noble *Author* of the *Satyr against Wit*, has villainously insinuated, that the *Gentleman* I have been talking of, did not Write the Book, to which he prefixed his own Name. I will appeal to you, whether 'tis possible for any Suggestion to be more *malicious* and *base* than this; and whether the *Publisher* of it can be used too *Scurvily*, or ought to be treated with any good *Manners*, which he has so notoriously *violated*. They talk of *Squibbing* him with *Epigrams*; for my part, I think 'tis doing him too much *Honour*, and making him more *considerable* than he deserves; however, if they go on with it, I shall not be wanting to contribute my *Quota* to so *Pious* a *Design*.

'Tis

'Tis now high time to come to the Author of the *Poeta Britantici*: I do the *Scoundrel* too much Honour to name him; but since two or three *Advertisements* have set him out in all his Trappings, for once I shall condescend to mention him: His Name is *Cobb*, the same numerical *Blew-Coat-Boy*, that some Years ago Writ a *Merry Pindarick* upon the *Queen's Death*, which was presented for *Blasphemy* at the *Old-Baily*. I can't imagine how it cou'd come into the Head of so obscure a *Wretch*, to think he cou'd do any Honour to the Persons he pretends to commend, or that his *Censure* should be taken in Prejudice of the meanest *Scribler* in *Town*.

Thus I have given you a short Account of these Two *Lampoons*; I should have made a Scruple to obey your Commands, (the only time I was ever tempted to Disobey you) in sending them down to you, but that I consider'd with my self, that your Worship in all probability has been a great *Transgressor* these *Christmas-Holidays*, and trespassed most enormously with your *Tenants* in *Roast-Beef* and *March-Beer*; for which Reason it may not be amiss for you to do *Penance*, as I reckon you will most plentifully, if you can have Patience to
Read

Read over the *City Bard's* and the *Blew-Coat Scribler's Poem*. I am, with all Respect,

Honoured Sir,

Your most humble Servant, &c.

To a Physician in the Country.

Giving a true State of the Poetical War between Cheapside and Covent-Garden.

By another Hand.

SIR,

WE are almost barren of News; the War betwixt the *Northern Crowns*, and the *Poetical Physicians* is the only Subject at present; *Holstein* and *Riga*, *Cheapside* and *Covent-Garden* the Scene of all our Coffee-house Debates. What passes in our two first, the Publick Prints will inform you; the latter I shall endeavour to give you some Account of: You are not Ignorant of the *Civil War* that is broke out amongst the Subjects of *Apollo*, and what Disorders we have lately had in *Parnassus*.

Two

Two brawny *Heroes*, the Sons of *Pagan*, head the opposite Factions; both have signalized themselves extraordinarily, one in Four Poems, which he has Printed, and to'ther in a Poem printed four times. The *City Bard* takes Arms to drive out *Wit*, as an *Evil Councillor* from all the *Realms* of *Apollo*. The *Covent-Garden Hero* rises in its Defence, and maintains its Services. This Quarrel is so far spread, that it's not like to be decided *Proprio Marte*; each Chief has his Faction, the *Knight* of the *Round-Table* has gathered a Body of Mercenaries, to whom, on the other side, are opposed a Squadron of Auxiliary Volunteers; and thus, as in *Forty One*, *Blew-Aprons*, and *Laced-Coats* are drawn up against one another, and the *Rabble* and *Gentlemen* set together by the Ears; each Side confident of Success, that trusting to their Multitudes, this to their Courage and Conduct. The *Pestle* and *Mortar-men* are drawn up against the *Æsculapian-Band*; the first, who like *Taylors* and *Women* measure the Goodness of every Thing by the *length*, assert the good old Cause of long *Bills*, and long *Poems*, against the *Jus Divinum* of Efficacy and Sense; and think it infinitely more Meritorious to write three or four *Folio's* without *Wit*, than to fill a small *Octavo* with it; and

and prefer the Art of *Swelling a Bill*, before the *Skill to Cure a Disease*. The *Cheapside Hero*, they say, devotes himself wholly to their Service, and *Rhimes* as well as Prescribes to the use of their Shops: However, this doubty Chief, in the midst of his *Cheapside Triumphs*, has been brought under Martial Discipline, and forc'd to run the Gantlet in *Coveyt-Garden*, and switch'd through the whole Posse of *Parnassus*, for fighting against the Law of Arms with false Colours. Those that favour his Cause complain of the Injustice and Indignity of his Punishment, alledging, he suffers for what he never did. They on the other Hand defend their Proceedings, and affirm they know him through his Disguise, and that coming upon 'em in Masquerade, he ought to suffer as a Spy, or an *Assassin*, and deserves no more Quarter, than he gives to his *Patients*. Notwithstanding this, his Party have rallied once more, and the *Mercenaries* are brought to the Attack, who hope to effect that by Stratagem, that they despair of by plain Force; and, like the *Scots* at the *Bass*, since they can't reduce 'em by *Arms*, attempt to Poison them with *Stink-Pots*. At the Head of those, is a Mendicant *Rhymer*, one that begs with a *Poem*, like a *Pass* in his Hand, and with
a *Sham*

a *Sham Brief*, as a Sufferer by *Poëtick Fire*, has Collected the Charity of well-disposed Persons through all *Parnassus* for above twice Twelve Months; and like a true Beggar, when he has tired 'em out, falls a Railing; For a Bribe from his Ballad-Printer's not large enough to Rob him of the Benefit of the Act of Parliament, for the Relief of Poor Prisoners; and the Promise of a Dinner now and then from Sir *Arthur*, he has consented to *Libel* his Benefactors, and return to his old Quarters, and subsist for the Remainder of his Life upon the *Basket*. Thus countenanced and encouraged, he lays about him most desperately, and like one not much concern'd for the Success, draws his *Incense*, and his *Ammunition* from the same *House of Office*. *Friends* and *Foes* are treated alike in Compliment, he Paints one with the same Sir-reverence, that he aims to bedaub the other; and when his Hand is in, like the Conqueror in *Hudibras's* Ovation, bestows his Or-dure very liberally amongst the Spectators. Thus, Sir, I have given you a true Account of the State of the *Poetical War*, headed on both Sides by Gentlemen of your Faculty; among whom, though here has been no Bloodshed, there has been as much Noise of Slaughter and Execution,

as

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as in *Holstein*, or *Livonia*. You may expect more on the same Subject, for the Quarrel is not like to drop, while *Hopkins* can tell his Fingers, or *Wesley* subsist on Mumping in Metre.

I am, &c.

LOVE

LOVE-LETTERS,

By several Hands

By Mr.----- to Madam-----

I Had a Mind to know, *Madam*, whether you had quarrel'd with me t'other Night, at the ——— or not; and therefore, writing to you Yesterday, I find now that you are angry at something; but may I be *discarded*, if I know the Reason: If you have made a Quarrel on my approving ———, I beg your *Pardon*, and shall henceforth do *Violence* to my own *Reason*, and contradict *Mankind* to agree with you; 'Tis hard to find any *Simpathy* in *Hearts*, where there's such *Contrariety* in *Opinions*. I shall therefore, *Madam*, henceforth square my *Sentiments* to yours in every thing; and if you will quarrel without a Cause, I will oblige you, and do so too. Your *Uneasiness*, *Madam*, wrongs either your own *Charms* or my *Sincerity*; either of which is a sensible Abuse to me. 'Tis a hard Fate,
that

that you can't *love* and be *easy*, and I can't *desist* and *live*: but I can *die* to make you *happy*; an ill-natur'd Line or two does the Business; for I cannot bear the *Spleen*, the *Rheumatism*, and *your displeasure* at once. So, *Madam*, strike now, and for ever quit your self of an unfortunate Man, who has but one Hand, which he thinks sufficient, since he can thereby ever own himself

Yours.

To the same.

Madam,

Sunday-Morning,

NEXT to my *Prayers*, I must address my *Devotions* to you; to you whom I have offended, and to whom I must offer a *penitential Sacrifice*, if an Oblation of a *bleeding Heart* can make any Atonement for my *Sin*, I offer it freely. Heaven is merciful, and so shou'd you be; I dare not approach, without your Permission: If you will Sign my *Pardon* in a Line from your *dear Hand* expect me with all the Joy of a repriv'd *Malefactor*. I am, *Madam*, *happy* or *miserable*, as you please to make me.

To

To the same

What shall I say to the *dearest Woman* upon Earth! Were my Thoughts common, how easily might they be express'd! But the Expression, like the Enjoyment in Love, is lost by a too ardent Desire; my *Soul* plumes it self in the secret Pride of being belov'd by you; and upon so just a Foundation of valuing my self, who can accuse me of Vanity? I can no more *compliment* what I *love*, than I can *flatter* what I *hate*; and therefore when I tell you, that your *Charms* are more and more engaging, and my Love improving, believe it for a Truth; hear my *Wish*, and then conclude me happy:

Oh! cou'd I find (grant Heaven that once I may)

A Nymph fair, kind, poetical and gay;

Whose Love shou'd blaze unsull'd and divine,

Lighted at first by the bright Lamp of mine:

Free from all sordid Ends, from Interest free,

For my own sake Affecting only me.

What a blest Union both our Souls should joyn!

I hers alone, as she was only mine;

Blest in her Arms, I should immortal grow,

Whilst in return, I made my Celia so.

Sweet generous Favours shou'd our Loves express,

I'd Write for Love, and she shou'd Love for Verse:

Not Sacharissa's self, great Waller's Fair,
 Shou'd for an endless Name with mine compare.
 She shou'd transcend all that e'er went before,
 Her Praises, like her Beauty shou'd be more :
 My Verse shou'd soar so high, the World shou'd see,
 I sung of her, and Celia smil'd on me :
 The World shou'd see that from my Love I drew,
 At once my Theam, and Inspiration too :
 Blest in my Wish, my Fair, I'm blest with you.

I went abroad Yesterday morning about seven, and return'd about one this morning, slept till past eight, then arose to tell you, that I dreamt of you all the time, and that I am your own.

To the same.

BY Heavens and Earth (my Dearest) I am ty'd Neck and Heels with Wine, and Company ! All the Spells of Love can't undo the *Charm* ; besides, *my Dear*, I am almost fuddled ; I shall stay here at the *Rose* till towards eleven ; it will be a tedious Walk to go home to Night, considering that you lie upon the same Floor with the Door : It is not impossible, methinks, for a Man of so much *Love* to slip in *Incognito*.
 Your

Your —— is with me, there will be a double Pleasure in deceiving him, and being happy in my *dear* One's Arms; I shall call at the Door, and see whether the Coast be clear: however, this, if it succeeds, will make me the happiest upon Earth——; however, my *Dear*, run no Hazard that may expose you; but consider, my *Dear*, the eager Wishes of the faithfullest, and most loving of Mankind.

To the same.

IF I did not *Love*, I wou'd not beg, and if ever you *loved*, you'll grant my *Pardon*; your Letter, *Madam*, has tormented me more than all the *Favours* of your whole Sex besides can please me; if I have *lost* you, I have *lost* my *self*, and shall be lost to all *Womankind*: My Letter last Night was written in heat of *Wine*; so Men guilty of *Murder* in their *Drink*, repent it all their *Lives*; mine is a greater *Crime*, for I have *stab'd* my *self*, pierc'd my own *Heart*, and now it bleeds with *Anguish* and *Despair*.

Stab'd my own Heart, and pierc'd your *Image*, there the Remembrance of the *Hap-*

piness I have enjoy'd, will now prove the greatest *Curse*; the melting Sighs, the moving Tears, the Joys, the Raptures that mounted me to Heaven, now cast me down to Hell: I shall now turn *Poet* in good earnest;—

*And like poor Ovid, banish'd from his Rome,
Curse that destructive Art, that caus'd his Doom.*

In short, *Madam*, I am *Mad*, and if I think farther, I shall let the World see it. Revoke that word, *eternal Silence*, or you make me eternally *Miserable*, for I am now the most Disconsolate of Mankind.

To a young Lady.

By another Hand.

My Dearest Madam,

FOr so I must ever think you, I hope you got safe to *London*, and that your Indisposition is abated, which will be the Means to make mine the more tolerable, since I can more easily bear mine own than yours; You expect I should tell you, how I am; and excepting a little Melancholy, the

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the Reason of which you know, I find my self tolerable, my Fever, I think, did not think fit to visit me last Night. I ramble out of one Room into another, now and then I let fall a Tear. I design to come to *London*, on *Sunday* next, that my Heart and I, may be in the same Place; till then, believe me most entirely

Yours.

To the same.

I Cannot help telling my Dearest, how much I am hers, what Pleasure I have in her Company, what Pain in her Absence; to love her, is but to see her; and to value her, is only to know her: But pray, my Dear Mrs. —, forget not to drink some Chocolate with me to Morrow, that I may once say, I spent a *Sunday* well; I am sure I shall have some good Thoughts in the Morning, because I shall think of you; and when I do so, I shall think of one that I passionately Love, and that I hope is not unmindful of

Hers.

To the same.

TO convince you, I am not given to Change, regard but this Piece of Paper, 'tis torn like my Heart at taking leave, and is such a Scribble as I usually write; I am harsh in my Stile, negligent of my Ink, and not too exact in fashioning up my Letter and cannot have the least Esteem for my self, but when I reflect that I have the Honour to be lookt upon as,

Madam, your most Humble.

To the same.

Dear Madam,

TIs to you, I must always address to tell me how I do; 'tis no matter, tho' I shou'd find my self in Health, if your Frowns shou'd tell me otherwise; know then, Madam, I languish, or revive, as you smile or look out of Humour; and though, at present, one wou'd guess by my Hand-writing, that I am just at the point

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point of Death; yet, I doubt not, but I shall live till to Morrow Evening, if you wou'd but promise, at that time, to come to

Tours.

*A Letter from a Lady to her Lover,
in the French Army; with a Tuft
of Hair inclosed in it.*

Out of the French.

Sir,

I Have sent you a *Pattern* of what you formerly us'd to like so much, and cou'd wish the whole Piece with you: I long to see you, and am sorry, that your *Honour* is dearer to you, than your *Mistress*, and that you prefer a Lodging in a *Trench* to her *Arms*. I begin to complain of the length of the *Campaigne*; but if it be true, that one of these inclosed in this Letter, can draw more than six *Horses*, I may have some Hopes they'll pull you hither to me; at least all that's left of you, for I suppose you are too much a *Hero*, to bring back all your *Limbs* with you, or to have any

K k 4

thing

thing *entire*, but your *Hearts* at your return to

Tours.

To Madam C-----ll.

Madam,

IT is not without some Pains, Madam, that I have gathered the following Account, which if it proves not advantageous to me; it is at least very satisfactory, to know why I am *refus'd*: Because you don't *like me*. A very *substantial Reason*, I must confess; and the only one I believe, on which the *Vertue* of your *Sex* is grounded: For, Madam, I am satisfied, your *Fortress* is not *Impregnable*, and though you won't *Capitulate* with me, though I offer your own *Terms*, I know the *Man*, to whom you would gladly *Surrender* upon his. A *Song*, or an *amorous Copy* of *Love-Verses*, wou'd gain the Point: 'Tis strange, Madam, that you shou'd be in *Love* with the *Sons* of the *Muses*; those poor *Rogues*, that can only pay with empty *Breath*, what I, with *substantial Gold*, wou'd *purchase*; and that used to be the most prevailing *Argument* with your *Sex*. Adieu, Madam,

half

half a Crown damns a *Poet* at any time, and for a Shilling, you may buy what he has puzl'd his Brains about half a Year to Collect; then, pray where lies the *Curiosity*? Now, I should think, a *little Money*, or a *little Wit*, clean *Linen*, and a *sweet Breath*, might be every jot as acceptable. I may reasonably suppose, your *Husband*, a *very Husband*; for Women are generally in Extreame, and your Sicknes of the *Fool* is increas'd to a Madness for a *Wit*. Now, *Madam*, I would advise you, to apply a *Medium* for your Cure, which you may find in your humble Servant: I am neither *Idiot* enough, to be called a *Driveller*; nor *Wit* enough, to set up for a *Poet*: yet, I'll venture a Wager, if you'll try, I can leave you as substantial as either. Consider, *Madam*, on this Advice, and Heaven give you Grace to put it in Practice: I shall expect your Answer, or you may expect the second Part of the same *Tune*. For in short, *Madam*, I Love you, and must, and will Possess: I am resolv'd not to be uneasie thus, when 'tis in your Power to give me *Ease*. I am, *Madam*, or will be wholly yours, and I hope to find one Day the same Conclusion, in a Letter from your dear self.

Madam

Madam C-----ll's Answer to-----

COU'd I value a Man upon his Fortune, I shou'd condescend to Converse with a *Fool*, though by your *Assurance* and *Vanity*, one wou'd take you for a *Wit*: my Conversation with the *Sons* of the *Muses*, is purely for my *Diversion*; if I thought you had Sence enough to make me Sport, I wou'd list you in the *Number*. I'm afraid the Product of your whole Life, wont amount to the Value of what you reckon a *Poet's* half Year's Pains, unless it were to expose your self, which they can do better for you: You tell me, you have a *sweet Breath*, but how can that be a *sweet Breath*, which *Stinks* so *Rankly* of *Nonsense*? You propose a *little Money*, and a *little Wit*; but I scorn to be beholding to any Man for the former, and the latter I have it already, without the *Arrogance* of *Riches*, and the ill Manners of *Vanity*. My *Husband* knows me so well by my *Company*, and you so well by your *Letter*, that he has given me leave to Answer it; nay, *commanded* me, else I had left you a Prey to your *Conceit* and *Vanity*; which in a little time, will make you fit for the *Stage*, and so make you good Company for *Women* of Sence.

Sir,

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Sir, I advise you to make your *Valet* transcribe your Letters for you, for your own hand Spells worse than a Whore.

His Answer to Mrs. C-----ll.

AN Answer, and by the *Husband's* Command too; better still, I hope you have *Wit* enough to make Advantage of the Liberty he gives you: Your Letter, Madam, shews you a Woman of Sence; and the *Scarceness* of that *Commodity* in your Sex, renders you the more agreeable: And it ought to be taken into consideration by the *Parliament*, to prevent the Increase of Fools, that no one Man shou'd engross a *Person* of *Wit* to *himself*: You are very severe, *Madam*; but no matter, I had rather be the Subject of your Thought this way, than not at all; for I may hope at last to convince you of the *Sincerity* of my *Passion*, and *Pity* is essential to your Sex. But, what am I doing! this is labouring to be a Fool indeed, and losing your Opinion of my *Vanity*; if you'll let me enter your List, *Madam*, under what Colours you please, I don't question coming off with Credit. And if you don't confess I have made you as good Sport as any of the *Parnassian* Family, I'll
give

give you leave to *cashier* me the next *Moment*. I'm glad to find such a Reformation in your Sex; but, I doubt, Madam, you'll hardly perswade many of 'em to be of your Mind: For I tell you, *Madam*, *Gold* is the *Womens God*; and there's scarce a *Dutchess* in this *Kingdom*, that can't find an use for a *superfluous Sum*, I deny your having *Wet* without *Vanity*; if you mean in your self, good Manners oblige me not to contradict you, tho' I have much ado to help reminding you of the following Line, in the Letter; 'tis out, Faith, before I was aware, your Pardon for that: If you mean the Lover, I must tell you, Madam, that no *Poet* is without the *Vanity* of *ten thousand a Year*, and I'll warrant, to assert his own *Wit*, wou'd venture to *Libel* a *Parliament-man*, for *hissing* his *damn'd dull Plays*, though he had pick'd his *Pocket* of *half a Crown*. Look ye, Madam, I have no occasion to expose the *Product* of my *Brain*; the *Product* of my *Estate* is sufficient to afford me *Necessaries*; and that's more than your *Poetical Friends* can warrant from their spare *Diet* and hard *Study*. And to answer the *Postscript*, good *Spelling* is beneath a *Gentleman*; so much by way of Answer. Now, *Madam*, I wish I knew of what Metal, this good Man of yours is made; for I would
fain

fain be acquainted with him, 'tis the best way of Intriguing in the World: If he is a *Courtier*, *Flattery* makes him my Friend; if he's a *Citizen*, *Custom* in his way of Trade; if he serves the *King*, a *bribe* may do the Business; if a *Man* below these, a *hard Word*, and a *big Look* makes you mine; and if I once had Possession, you shou'd find I had Courage enough to defend my own, though with all the Submission to you imaginable. For believe me, Madam, to be the sincerest of all your humble Servnts.

An Answer.

I 'M very glad to hear, Sir, that you are a *Member of Parliament*, for by that means you may prefer a Bill in favour of my Sex, that may provide against the troublesome *Suit* of those we don't care for. Pray Sir, be kind to the D — of N —; I don't think but an *Act of Resumption*, in case of a Wife may pass. If an *Act of Parliament* make a *Cuckold*, it may be of dangerous Consequence to all the *Husbands* in the *Nation*; for the Subjects will be for following the Example of the higher Powers. I imagine you to be of the *Court Party*, you understand

understand a Bribe so well; but I can assure you my Husband falls not in your Road; he's no *Courtier*, consequently no *Knave*, no *Soldier*; so not in your Power to use ill; no trusting *Cit* to oblige your *Squireship's Acquaintance*; nor Fool enough to be frighted with the *Bray of an Ass*: thus much by way of Answer to your Wish. And now, Sir, I tell you, I want much of your *Vanity* to relish your *Flattery*; I have *Wit* enough to distinguish the Arrogance of a *Coach and Six* from the Complaisance of a *Man of Sense*; I despise your *Price*, and *nauseate* your *Person*; and if you don't desist, I shall expose your Name in Print; and your Years will shew you *Bankrupt* in *Love*, as your *Letters* do of *Sense* and good *Manners*; and that you are deficient in 'em all, I believe the World will agree with,

Sir,

Your humble Servant.

To

To Mrs.-----

By another Hand.

Madam,

I Must acquaint you in short, that you must either *pull* out your *Eyes*, or I must *pull* out mine; either you must not be *Handsome*, or I must be *Blind*. Yet though my *Passion* is as *violent* perhaps as any Man's, you must not expect I shou'd either *Hang* or *Drown*. I shou'd betray great Want of *Sense*, and little Knowledge of your *Merit*; to be willing to leave the World while you are in it. To deal sincerely with you, *Madam*, I *choose* infinitely the Happiness of *Living* with you, before the Glory of *Dying* for you. Besides, I have that *good* Opinion of your *Sense*, to believe you prefer the *living* Lover to the *dead*; the Lips that are *warm*, to those that are *cold*; the Limbs which have *Motion*, to those which have *none*. If I must *die*, *Madam*, *kill* me with your *Kindness*, but not with your *Cruelty*: Let me *expire* rather upon your *Bosom*, than at your Feet. If you shall be *tenderly* inclined to give me a *Death* of this kind, I am prepared to receive it on any Ground in
the

the Three Kingdoms: Appoint but your *place*, and I shall not fail to meet my fair *Murderer*.

To my Lady-----

Madam,

I Am now at my Lady—, where we have had a very *warm* Debate: Among many general Things we happen'd to fall into a Discourse of Queen *Elizabeth*, and a Question arising what Complexion she was of; one Lady said, she was *Fair*, another maintain'd she was *Black*, a third contend'd she was *Brown*. The Dispute was managed with very great *Heat*, and little *Certainty* on all sides. *Speed*, *Baker*, *Cambden*, were consulted; but we found the Historians either *silent*, or as much *divided* as the Company; at last, after a *long* Debate, it was the *unanimous* Resolution of both Ladies and Gentlemen, to *refer* it to your Ladiship's *Determination*, as a Person of greater *Antiquity*, and consequently of better *Authority* than our *Chronicles*. If you shall do us the *favour* to give us some *Satisfaction* in this Matter, 'twill be a *general* Obligation

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Obligation to the *whole* Company, and a
particular Honour done to,

Madam,

Your Ladiship's obedient Servant.

To the same.

A Love-Letter to an Old Lady.

Madam,

PAying a Visit yesterday to Mrs. ———
I was informed of your *Ladiship's* Dis-
pleasure: What shou'd occasion your In-
dignation, I cannot well apprehend: I do
assure you, no Man living has a greater
Veneration for your *Ladiship*, or has been
readier upon all Occasions to testify it to
the World. To convince you of the Truth
of what I say, I will relate to you what
happened last *Saturday*; by which it will
appear, that I have been so far from *ridi-*
culing you *Ladiship*, which is the *Accusa-*
tion you *fasten* upon me, that no one could
have given greater *Demonstration* of his *Re-*
spect: For being in *Company*, where men-
tion was made of your *Ladiship*, not so ho-
nourable indeed, as I could have wished,

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or

or your *Quality* and *Character* might have required; I took occasion to do Justice to your Merit: *Gentlemen*, said I, you do my Lady wrong; for my own part I must *profess*, I think her a very agreeable *Woman*. You cannot be *serious* sure, *replies* a certain *Gentleman*, who had more *Malice* than *Wit*; in my whole *Life*, I never saw so *hideous* a *Complexion*. Sir, said I, 'tis unjustly done, to find fault with a *Complexion*, which is none of her own; if her Face displeases you, blame her *Woman* who made it. But I hope, returned he, you will not deny, but that she is *Red-hair'd*: With submission, Sir, I do, to my certain knowledge she has not one *Hair* on her *Head*. But then her *Teeth*, all the *World* must allow are *execrable*. I deny it, Sir, for she has but *one* that is bad. But you must grant me her *Chin* is too long by three Inches. But do you apprehend the Reason? 'Tis because her *Neck* is too short by two. I see, Sir, said he, with some little heat, you are obstinately bent to oppose the Power of Truth; but I hope you are not so far prejudiced, as to maintain her *Breath* to be sweet? That Infirmity, Sir, replied I, is the Effect of the Foulness of her *Lungs*, and not of her *Mouth*; and if her Lungs are rotten, is it her *Ladiship's* Fault, or *Nature's*?
And

And then her Gate, says he, is the most disagreeable in the World. You have betrayed at once, Sir, said I, both your *Malice*, and your *Ignorance*; if you had the least Acquaintance with her *Ladiship*, you must have known better; Alas! poor *Lady*! she has not walkt without *Crutches* these Ten Years. But then her Conduct, I hope you will not undertake to justify that; how does it become *Old Eve*, think you, to *Patch*, and *Paint*; *Intrigue*, read *Romances*, and *Love-Verses*, talk *Smuttily*, look *Amorously*, dress *Youthfully*; infomuch, that if it were not for her *Looks*, you could not distinguish her from her Daughter. Under favour, Sir, you mistake, 'tis her *Grand-Daughter* you mean. And then to keep a young Fellow of five and twenty to satisfy her brutal Lust. 'Tis false, I have heard Mr.—— affirm a thousand times she was *Insatiable*.

He would have proceeded in his Defamations, but I desired him to omit all farther Discourse on that Subject, for that I could not, with Patience, support, that a Woman of your *Ladiship's* Merit, and Virtue, and a Woman for whom I had so particular an Honour, should be so impudently Vilified and Blasphemed to my Face.

I hope by this time you are made sensible, *Madam*, that I am quite another Person than you apprehended me to be, and that I am so far from having any *disrespectful* Thoughts of your *Ladiship*, that no one of your *Grand-Children*, the *nearest* Relation you have *remaining*, could have gone farther in your *Vindication*. But I would not have you attribute my *Defence* of your *Ladiship*, altogether to *Respect*; give it a *tenderer*, and *traer* Name, and call it *Love*. I say *Love*; for let me die, *Madam*, if I have not a violent Passion for your *Ladiship*. I know you may very well suspect the Truth of what I say; for *Love* in me, you will tell me, ought to imply *Beauty* in you. But *Love*, you know very well, creates *Beauty* no less frequently, than *Beauty* does *Love*. And if by the help of *Imagination*, I can find out *Charms* in you, which no Body else can discover; I think I have reasonable Foundation enough for my *Passion*: there is *something*, I know not where to fix it, 'tis not in your *Face* or *Shape*, or *Mien*, or *Air*, or any part of your *Body*; much less in your *Mind*: but *something* there is so very agreeable; *something* I know not what, nor where, so bewitching that 'tis not in my power to defend my *Heart* against you. Perhaps the *malicious World* will

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will say you are *Old*; but we know *old* Wine intoxicates more than *new*; and an *aged* Oak is stronger than a *young* one. 'Tis with your *Ladiship's Beauty*, as with *old* Buildings when they fall, it destroys with its Ruins. As I profess my self an *Admirer* of *Antiquity*, by consequence I should have no small *Passion* for your *Ladiship*: For I must tell you, *Madam*, there are finer Fragments of *Antiquity* in your *Face*, than any *Greece* or *Italy* can boast of; and more *Beauty* lies *buried* in one *Wrinkle* of yours, than in the *Ruins* of the most stately *Arches*, or most magnificent *Temples*. You cannot therefore question the Sincerity of my Profession, when I tell you I am, *Madam*, with all Reality,

*Your Ladiship's most passionate Adorer,
and most obedient, humble Servant.*

To a Lady that had got an Inflammation in her Eyes.

Madam,

YOU will hardly believe, perhaps, how much people talk of your Indisposition. The late *Eclipse*, when the Sun it self

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was

was in Labour, occasion'd not half the Discourse, as the present Distress your *Eyes* are in, throughout the whole *Empire* of your *Beauty*, that is, throughout the whole *Kingdom*. Nothing is more generally talk'd of, or more universally lamented. Those *beautiful Eyes*, which were wont to spread Joy in all *Hearts*, now diffuse Sorrow in every *Breast*: at the same time they raise different *Passions*; the *Women* pity what they *envy*, and the *Men* lament what they *adore*. 'Tis true, there are some discontented Persons, that perhaps have formerly felt your Rigour, who let drop bold Expressions; they say, your *Eyes* are deserv'dly punish'd for the many *Violences* and *Barbarities* they have committed; that 'tis but just they should be *afflicted*, who have made so many poor Men *suffer*; and that it seems a manifest *Judgment* of *Heaven*, that the *Distemper* shou'd *attaque* you in the very Place where you *assault* Mankind. These are the Murmurs of some few Men, *Madam*, whom we except from the Multitudes who bewail the Calamities of your *Eyes*.

Sir Thomas ———, who you know speaks fine things, did me the honour of a Visit Yesterday, and commands me to tell you, That had he as many *Eyes* as *Argus*,
to

to give yours one Moment's ease, he would pluck them all out, and throw them, as he would *himself*, and his *Fetters*, at your *Feet*. For my own part, *Madam*, who have but two Eyes, one of them is at your *Ladiship's* Service, the other I am unwilling to lose, because I am unwilling to lose the sight of you.

Your grave *Uncle* likewise gives his Service to you; 'twas my Fortune to meet him at my *Lady*—'s Lodgings, where your *Ladiship*, and your present Indisposition, being the Subject of our Discourse, the old Gentleman, who *moralizes* on every thing under the Sun, lifting up his Eyes to Heaven, and laying his Hand upon his sage Breast, Alas! says he, see the Vanity of all Things here below! See, Ladies, see Gentlemen, see how frail is Beauty! how uncertain its Possession! the finest Eyes in the Universe are in danger of losing their Beautiful Lustre! How imperfect are the most perfect Things! Alas, alas, *Vanity of Vanity, all is Vanity*, says the Preacher.

When the *Oracle* had ceased, Sir, said I, (with an affected grave Look) I remember well, you were wont frequently to tax your Niece with *Pride*; don't you think Providence design'd this present Affliction as a Lesson of *Humility* to her? Does it not

seem the very Intention of *Heaven*, by this Indisposition, that those very *Eyes* which may justly make her *proud*, shou'd teach her to be *humble*: that where she is *strongest*, she shou'd find her self *weak*: that where she is most *divine*, she shou'd confess her self *mortal*.

Very religiously and solidly reflected, says old *Solomon*; I profess I am surprized, to find so much Maturity in so much Youth: Go on in the Ways of Wisdom and prosper.

Thus, *Madam*, like a faithful *Historian*, as I am, I have related to you, what is the Discourse of the World upon this Infirmitly; but I am sensible, I have made your *Ladiship's* Patience suffer, by the unfashionable Length of my Letter, which I fear will give your *Eyes*, in the Weakness they are in at present, too much pain in the reading. I shall conclude, with my Advice and my Wish: My Advice, That you wou'd take care of the finest *Eyes* in the World. My Wish, That the Flame were remov'd from your *Eyes* to your *Heart*. I am,

Madam,

Your Ladiship's most obedient Servant.

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To Mr. B----- in Covent-Garden.

An Account of a Journey to Exon, &c.

April 8. 1700.

AS we have one good *Quality* in our Sex beyond what *yours* can boast of, that is, seldom to make a Promise but with a Design to keep it; I have therefore been careful to let you see I cannot easily forget any thing which so great an Obligation as my *Word* hath engag'd me to remember: And as there was nothing needful but a bare Remembrance of my Promise to induce me to preserve it, so I hope, on your part, there will be nothing more requir'd to render what I have sent you acceptable than a Willingness to receive it: I confess I have given you but a rude Account of my *Journey*, every part just scribled o'er with as much freedom as 'twas acted, wanting leisure to put it in any other than a *loose Morning-dress*, not questioning but it may please you as well without the *Formalities* of *Stile*, as a *pretty Woman* without *Stays* may some of your *Acquaintance*.

In the first place I shall give you a rough Draught of those *discouraging Mortals* our Company was compos'd of in the Stage-

Stage-Coach, (viz.) A *Barrister at Law*, an *Attorney's Clark*, a *Cornish Justice*, a *Taylor*, and a *Valet* to a *Parliament-man* that would be, but some dispute arising in the Election prevents me fixing his *Title*, that had I been travelling in a *Dutch Scout* or a *Gravesend Tilt-boat*, I could not have been treated with less *Manners*, or teas'd with more *Impertinence*.

The *Justice*, notwithstanding the Government's Care for the *Reformation of Vice*, was as drunk as a *Dutch Captain* before he engages, and, for the first Day, talk'd of nothing but *Fox-hounds*, *March-beer*, *Warrants*, *Whipping-posts* and *Vagabonds*, *Hallowing* as laudably in every interval of his *Nonsense*, as if he had been riding three-quarter-speed at the very Heels of his *Beagles*, larding his other *Qualifications* now and then with a Scrap of an old *Hunting Song*, with a *Hey down*, *ho down*, &c. which gave me good reason to suspect he had been much more conversant with *Robin Hood's Balads* than with *Keeble's Statutes*, understanding the latter I believe as much as a *German Jugler* does *Necromancy*, or a *Lord-Mayor State-Policy*.

The *Limbs* of the *Law* were much disturb'd at his *Bawling*, for I conceive they love no *Bodies Noise* but their own. They
desir'd

desir'd him to sleep; but he cry'd, *Zounds*, Sir, I win't sleep; I don't care a F---t for your Anger, I'm a Justice of Peace, and worth thirty Thousand Pound, and am the head Man where I live; and By G--d, if you come to Lancthon, I'll give you a Glass of the best March-Beer you ever drank in your Life: but I will make a Noise if I please. I was in hopes of seeing Law and Justice fall together by the Ears, but at last Justice slept and the Law got the better by surviving it.

The Taylor, had you seen him, you would have sworn he had been broke by the *Jubilee Beaux*, for he had Lines of Faith in his Face, and his Clothes bore the Marks of Poverty; he complain'd very much of *Trusting*: I find 'tis a common Calamity, and ruins more Families than the *Royal Oak-Lottery*.

The Valet personated his Master to a Title, and was as arrogant and noisie as e'er a Country Squire in England.

Now, If I were to be hang'd, I can't tell who had most Manners of all these: The Lawyer slept Dogs-sleep most part of the Way, I suppose the better to ruminate on the Causes he had in hand. The Clark was as impertinent as a *Midwife at a Gossipping*, and I as dull as an *old Woman at a Funeral*. They fail'd not to Eat and Drink heartily upon

upon the Road, nor to make me club to the Reckoning; *Justice* and *Law* were both of a side in that particular; and the *Court of Equity* being very chargeable, I chose to submit upon any Terms, rather than seek for Remedy.

After the Fatigue of four Days, which might serve for a reasonable Penance for all the Sins I ever committed in my Life, I arriv'd at *Exon*, where we met the *Judges* entering the Town in as much Triumph as ever *Cæsar* did *Rome* after a Victory; the *High-Sheriff* rode in as much State as a *Colonel* of the *City Train-bands*, and much in the same order, only the *Sheriff* march'd in the Rear of his Army, and the other in the Front. The next Day being *Sunday*, call'd by the Natives of this Country *Maze-Sunday*, (and indeed not without some reason, for the People look'd as if they were gallied) I was wak'd by the tremendous Sound of a *Horse-trumpet*, I imagin'd some *Monster* was to be seen, and, looking out of my Window, I saw several sorts; the first were *Mrs. Sheriff* and her *Husband*, (for Women rule in *this* Climate, and therefore I give her the Preheminence) in a triumphant Chariot (erected on purpose for that Occasion) with *Disk* and *Doll* crouding to see their *Worships*, as if it had been his *Czarish Majesty*;

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Majesty; the Custom it seems is to conduct them in this manner to the most magnificent Church of the place, where we will leave them to their several Ejaculations.

*I am your oblig'd Servant,
You know who.*

The Answer.

Madam,

Apr. 22. 1700.

I Received your Letter, and am glad to find by it, that you have got that by making a small *Journey to Exeter*, for which other People are forced to cross the *Alpes*, and beat the *Hoof to Room*, I mean the *Remission* of your *Sins*, which you think you have made a reasonable Atonement for, by suffering so much from the *Impertinence* of the *Cornish Justice* and the two Limbs of the *Law*.

But, *Madam*, don't flatter your self, or think that your *Chalk* will be so easily wiped out. You have been a great *Sinner* in your time, and *four Days Penance* in a *Stage-Coach* will hardly atone for the *Sins* you have committed: And, because we are too
apt

apt to be over-favourable to our selves, give me leave, *Madam*, to awaken your *Conscience* out of this *dangerous State of Security*, by laying before you some of the many *Sins* you are *accountable* for.

Imprimis, Here are *People in Town* that charge you with *Murders* numberless; and, unless you *heartily repent* of them, and promise to *commit* no more, I find but little hopes of you. Yes, *Madam*, you are charged with *Murder*, with this *horrid Aggravation* too on your side, That whereas other *Assassines* only *murder* their *Enemies*, or such as they suspect to be so, you make no *scruple* to *kill* your *Lovers* that throw themselves at your *Feet*, and wou'd purchase a *single Smile* from you at a *seven Years Service*.

In the next *place*, You are accused of *Theft*. Set your *Hand* to your *Heart*, *Madam*, and do but consider how many of those *valuable Commodities* you have *stolen* in your time, yet never had the *Conscience* to restore them to the *right Owners*. What makes the *Crime* worse in you, you have added *Sacrilege* to *Theft*, and *stole* away *Peoples Hearts* at *Church*, in the time of *Divine Service*, and in the *sight* of *Moses* and *Aaron*.

You'll tell me, perhaps, that this is no *Theft*, and that if *Men* will put their *Hearts* upon

upon you, how can you help it. But *Madam*, some People gave them you, who had no right to dispose of them, as I cou'd instance in a thousand *married Men* that *sighed* for you, and according to the *ancient Proverb*, the *Receiver* is as bad as the *Thief*, for they *stole* 'em from their *Wives* to bestow 'em upon you.

Thirdly and *lastly*, *Madam*, you have not only your own *Sins* but those of other People to answer for. How many *Women* have you made guilty of the *horrid Sin* of *Detraction*, and tell a thousand *malicious Stories* of you, only because you were *handsomer* than they? How many *Men* have you made guilty of *Perjury*, and tempted them to forsake their *former Vows*, to *sacrifice* 'em to you?

Thus, *Madam*, I have made *bold* to lay some of your *Sins* before you. Should I undertake to send you a full *Catalogue* of them, I should have as fine time on't, as the *Commissioners*, that are to inspect publick Accounts. Therefore never think that your *Exeter Journey* has *compounded* for them. I wou'd advise you this *holy Year* of *Jubilee*, to turn your *Face* towards *Rome*; but, alas, you'd spoil the *Devotion* of all the *Pilgrims* there, that according to our last *Advices*, are above a *hundred thousand strong*. In short,

short, *Madam*, I don't know what course to advise you to; only don't stay long in the *Country*, for that wou'd be to *Trespass* against a *positive Text*, and to put your *Chandle* under a *Busshel*. Come to *Town* as soon as you can, and begin to make *Restitution* in the *Place* where *you* have done the most *Mischief*.

You desire, in my Answer, I shou'd transmit you some *News*; I assure you, *Madam*, there is not enough stirring about *Town*, to fill the last half Column of the *Weekly Papers*, without a tedious repetition of the same fulsome Stuff: that the *City News-hounds* sit as hush over their *Coffee*, as so many *English-men* in a *Tavern* when the *Drawer* has brought the *Reckoning*: But however, for once, I will strain a Point to oblige you.

Notwithstanding the *late War* in *Flanders*, and the present *Year* of *Jubilee*, have rid the *Nation* of abundance of *Fools*, yet *Knaves* are every *Term* as thick in *Westminster-Hall*, and *Cuckolds* every *Day* as numerous upon *Change*, as if they had still, without loss, preserv'd their *ancient Number*.

Poetasters are grown as numerous in this *Town* as *Quack-Doctors* or *Stock-Jobbers*, and every one so applies himself to the *Stage*,
that

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that the *White-Fryars Printers* are quite beggar'd for want of *Balaads*: Yet *Wit*, I observe is as scarce as 'twas in the time of *Jeffry Chaucer*, when a *Distich* of *Verses* were worth a *Page* of *Prose*, and a *Song*, with a *Fa-la-la Chorus*, was much more listen'd to than a *Sermon*.

Discretion in married *Women*, is here grown as scarce as *Modesty* in *Maids*; they so forward their *Daughters*, by their own foolish *Talk* and *Example*, that the pretty *Miss* at *Seven*, instead of a *Rattle*, talks of nothing but a *Husband*, and the young *Lady* at *Eleven* is as ripe in her *Thoughts*, and as pert in her *Behaviour* as if her *Education* had been at the famous *Mrs. G---*'s, near *Red-Lyon-Square*, instead of a *Dancing-School*.

I know, *Madam*, some of this *News* must seem strange to a *Woman* of your *Virtue*, but the more surprizing, generally the more acceptable, especially if it be true; for which reason I sent it you to supply the scarcity of such as might have been more welcome, and therefore beg your acceptance of it in room of better, from, *Madam*,

Your humble Servant.

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An

*An Exhortatory Letter, to an Old
Lady that smoaked Tobacco.*

Madam,

THough the ill-natured World *censures* you for *Smoaking*, yet I would advise you, Madam, not to part with so innocent a Diversion: In the first place it is Heathful; and as *Galen de usu Partium* rightly observes, is a Sovereign Remedy for the Tooth-ach, the constant Persecutor of Old Ladies. *Secondly*, Tobacco, though it be a Heathenish Weed, is a great help to Christian Meditations; which is the Reason I suppose that Recommends it to our Parsons; the Generality of whom, can no more write a *Sermon* without a *Pipe* in their *Mouths*, than a *Concordance* in their *Hands*: besides, every Pipe you break, may serve to put you in mind of Mortality, and show you upon what slender Accidents, Man's Life depends. I knew a *Dissenting Minister*, who on Fast-days used to *mortify* upon a *Rump* of Beef, because it put *him*, as he said, in mind, that all *Flesh* was *Grass*; but I am sure much more may be learnt from Tobacco. It may instruct you that Riches, Beauty, and all the Glories of this
World

World vanish like a *Vapour*. *Thirdly*, It is a pretty *Play-thing*: A Pipe is the same to an Old Woman, that a Gallant is to a young one, by the same Token they make both *Water* at Mouth. *Fourthly* and *Last-ly*, It is *fashionable*, at least 'tis in a fair way of becoming so; cold Tea, you know, has been this long while in Reputation at Court, and the *Gill* as naturally ushers in the *Pipe*, as the *Sword-Bearer* walks before the *Lord-Mayor*.

I am your Ladiships humble Servant.

To Dr. Garth.

WHether your *Letter* or your *Prescription* has made me well, I protest I cannot tell; but thus much I can say, that as the one was the most nauseous thing I ever knew, so the other was the most entertaining. I would gladly ascribe my Cure to the last; and, if so, your *Practice* will become so *universal*, you must keep a *Secretary* as well as an *Apothecary*.

The Observations I have made are these, that your *Prescription* staid not long with me, but your *Letter* has, especially that

part of it where you told me I was not altogether out of your Memory: You'll find me much alter'd in every thing when you see me, but in my esteem for your self: I, that was as lank as a *Crane*, when I left you at *London*, am now as plump as an *Ortolan*. I have left off my *false Calves*, and had yesterday a *great Belly* laid to me. A *facetious Widow*, who is my Confident in this Affair, says you ought to *Father* the *Child*; for *He* that lends a Man a *Sword* is in some part accessary to the *Mischief* is done with it; however, I'll forgive you the *Inconvenience* you've put me to. I believe you were not aware you were giving *Life* to two *People*. Pray let me have a *Consolatory Letter* from you upon this new *Calamity*; for nothing can be so welcome, excepting *Rain* in this *Sandy Country* where we live. The *Widow* saith, she resolves to be *Sick*, on purpose to be acquainted with you: But I tell her she'll relish your *Prescriptions* better in *full Health*: And if at this distance you can do her no *Service*, pray *prescribe* her

Your humble Servant, T. M.

To

To his Poetical Friend, advising him
to Study the Mathematicks.

Out of Quevedo.

A T length, my *Friend*, I begin to awake out of those Dreams and Visions, which the reading of Verses and Poems has so long plung'd me in. My middle Years put all those Delusions to a stand; I have now some moderate Esteem for other Thoughts besides Images and Descriptions. I am not in my former Extasies at every *Metaphor*, and can almost bear the Rapture of a fine *Turn*. Poetry, believe me, leads the *Reader*, as well as the *Knight*, into an *enchanted* World: The Objects are all there drest in false Colours, and nothing appears in its due proportion. But if it deceives us in all things abroad, what Disorders and Confusion does it raise at home? By feeding the Mind with Delicacies, it makes it mad after Pleasure, and lets all the Passions loose upon us. Our Joys it blows up too *high*, and makes our Grievs sit *heavier*; and, what is yet worse, it kindles in us that foolish Passion *Love*, the ruine of our Ease, and Dotage even in Youth.

Whereas

Whereas *Mathematics* improve all our Faculties, makes the Judgment stronger and the Memory take in more, The Dull it teaches to *Perceive*, and the Giddy to *Attend*. It distinguishes between *True* and *False*, and enures us to Difficulties: Besides, it gives us a thousand Advantages in Life. By this the *Miser* counts his Bags, and the *Country-man* knows his Times and Seasons. This gives our Cannon aim in War, and in Peace furnishes every Workman with his Tools. How many noble Engines has it invented? In one the Wind labours for us, and another turns Bogs and Pools into firm Land. This builds us Houses, defends our Towns, and makes the Sea useful. Nor are its Effects less wonderful than advantageous. The *Mathematician* can do more things than any Poet e'er yet conceiv'd. He in a Map can contract *Asia* to a span, and in a Glass shew a City to a single House, and an Army to a Man. He can set the Heavens a thousand Years forward, and call all the Stars by their Names. There is scarce any thing without his reach; He can gauge the Channel of the Sea, and weigh *Saturn*. He sees farthest into the Art and Skill of the *Creator*, and can write the best Comment on the six Days Work.

Be

Be advis'd therefore to employ your self rather in the *improving* of your Understanding, than *debauching* of your Passions, and to prefer *Realities* before *Appearances*. In my Mind, to make a *Dial* is harder than to find a *Motto* to it, and a Prospect drawn in Lines pleasanter than one in Words. Instead of Descriptions of cool Groves and flowry Gardens, you may inform your self of the Situation and Extent of Empires, and while others are wandering in *Elysian*-fields and fancy'd Shades below, you may raise your Thoughts to the Infinity of *Space* above, and visit all those Worlds that shine upon us here: Think most of *Mercury* when he is farthest off the Sun, and mind little in *Venus* but her Periodic Motion.

To let you see I have got the start of you, I now follow the old Rule of, *Nulla dies sine Lineâ*, and am so far advanc'd in *Geometry* that I defie any Man to make a rounder Circle, or cut a Line in two more nicely than my self. I am well vers'd in Squares, am no stranger to the Doctrine of Proportion, and have transpos'd *A, B, C, D*, in all the Mathematical *Anagrams* they are capable of. My Chamber I have survey'd five times over, and have at length found out a convenient Place for a South-Dial. I
am

am at present about a Bargain of Pins, which you shall soon see dispos'd into Bastions and Counterscarps. I felt at first, I must confess a great Confusion in my Head between Rhimes and Angles, Fiction and Demonstration. But at length *Virgil* has resign'd to *Euclid*, and Poetical Feet and Numbers to their Namesakes in *Geometry* and *Arithmetic*. In short, I write altogether upon Slate, where I make Parallels instead of Couplets, and Describe nothing but a Circle.

Let me for the future therefore catch no Poet in your Hands, unless it be *Aratus* or *Dionysius*, and follow my Counsel, unless you can make one of these Studies subservient to the other, your *Poetry* wise and learn'd, and your *Mathematics* pleasant and Ingenious. I am, Sir,

Tours, &c.

The End of the First Part.

LETTERS

- O F

Friendship,

A N D

Several other OCCASIONS:

The Third Part.

Written by

Mr. Dryden,	}	{	Mr. Congreve,
Mr. Wycherly,	}	{	and
Mr. ———	}	{	Mr. Dennis.

W I T H

LETTERS written between Mr. Dennis and Mr. Congreve,
Concerning Humour in Ancient
and Modern Comedy.

L O N D O N:

Printed for S. B. and sold by the Booksellers
of London, and Westminster. 1701.

LETTERS

TO THE

MEMBERS

OF THE

ASSOCIATION

OF

THE

UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA

AND

THE

The Epistle Dedicatory
tended to find your self at the Head of
Vulgar Company; a Company, which
~~Names and Desires are universally known~~
~~a Company raised far above the Level of~~
Marking by their own extraordinary Merit
and yet proud to be Honoured by
They are Gentlemen, in true, who dis-
vided in their Interests, and who differ
their Judgments of Things, which all
World agrees, and they always con-
cure, to be of one Mind.
To the Right Honourable
Charles Montague, Esq;
One of the Lords of the Treasury,
Chancellor of the Exchequer;
and one of His Majesty's most
Honourable Privy-Council.

S I R,
AS soon as I had resolv'd to make this
Address to you, that the Present
might not be altogether unworthy
of you, I took care to obtain the
Consent of my Friends to publish some Let-
ters, which they had writ as Answers to
mine.

When I look upon my self, I find I have
reason to beg Pardon for my Presumption:
But when I consider those Gentlemen, I am
encourag'd to hope that you will not be of-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

fended to find your self at the Head of no
Vulgar Company; a Company, whose
Names and Desert are universally known,
a Company rais'd far above the Level of
Mankind by their own extraordinary Merit,
and yet proud to do Homage to yours.
They are Gentlemen, 'tis true, who are di-
vided in their Interests, and who differ in
their Politick Principles, but they agree in
their Judgments of Things, which all the
World admires, and they always consent
when they speak of you.

In presenting this little Book to you, I
only design'd to shew my Zeal and my Gra-
titude; but they assure me unanimously,
that I have likewise shewn my Judgment.
Tho' indeed, Sir, the number of the Great,
who cast a favourable Eye upon Human
Learning, is not so considerable, but that a
Man who would Address any thing of this
Nature to one of them, may soon determine
his Choice. Proficients in other Arts are
encouraged by Profit, which is their main
Design, but he who bestows all his time up-
on Human Studies is incited by Glory alone,
and the World takes care that he should
have no more than he seeks for. The En-
thusiast, the Quack, the Pettifogger, are
rewarded for Torturing, and for Deluding
Men;

The Epistle Didicatory,

Men; but Humanity has met with very barbarous Usage, only for Pleasing, and for Instructing them. The very Court, which draws most of its Ornament from it, has but too often neglected it; there Learning in general has been disregarded: For none but great Souls are capable of great Designs, and few Courtiers have had Greatness of Mind enough to procure the Promotion of Science, which is the Exaltation of Human Nature, and the Enlargement of the Empire of Reason. Our Ministers of State have formerly behaved themselves with so much Indifference, as if it would have lessen'd them to have taken any care of Letters: They have shewn themselves as perfectly unconcern'd, as if not one had discover'd, that at a time when our Neighbours are grown so knowing, the Publick Safety depends on the Progress of Learning, and that to Patronize Science, is to take care of the State. Besides, too many of our States-men have been engag'd in unjust Designs. Most of our Politicians have done their Endeavour to encroach on the Crown, or to attempt on the People. Few have had Capacity and Integrity enough to keep the Balance so steady, as to maintain Prerogative at once, and assert Privilege; to serve the King Zealously, and their Country Faithfully; to possess at
the

The Epistle Dedicatory.

the same time the Favour of the one, and the Hearts of the other, to such a degree as to be courted by the People to serve as their Representative; at the very time that they are employ'd by the King in Matters of the highest Importance. Instead of that, most of them have had reason to be afraid of the King or the Commons; and Men who have been solicitous for their own Safety, have seldom appear'd concern'd for the Good of others. Few then have been and are in a Condition to be Protectors of Learning, and therefore those happy Few, deserve all the Honours which we are able to pay them. Of those, Sir, you appear in the foremost Rank, and are to the Commonwealth of Learning what you are to the State, a great Defence and a shining Ornament. You have warmly encouraged all sorts of Studies, but have been justly and nobly partial to those, for which the State has made no Provision: Which is enough to gain you the Esteem of all who have any Regard for Learning; and to win the very Souls of all, who, like me, are charm'd with the softer Studies of Humanity. For which your Zeal has been so diffusive, that it has extended it self even to me, tho' a bare Inclination to cultivate Eloquence and Poetry, was the only thing which could recommend me to you: Yet even this
has

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has been encourag'd by the Promise of your Protection, and by the Humanity of your Receiving me: The Access which I have had to you, has been the greatest Obligation that you could lay upon a Man who has still vallu'd Merit above all the World, and who has sought his Improvement more than he has his Advancement. When I have at any time approach'd you, I have found in you none of those Forbidding Qualities, of which they accuse the Great: Instead of those I have found an Attractive and a Humane Greatness, the Generous Sincerity of the Man of Honour, joyn'd with the Grace and Complaisance of the Courtier, and a Deportment Noble without Pride, and Modest without Descending. Nature has made me something averse from making my Court to Fortune: But I am proud to attend upon real Greatness; and to wait upon you, since first you encouraged me, has been at once my Duty and my Ambition.

The Permission which you gave me to approach you, was so great an Incitement to me, that I believe it might have brought me to write well, if I had not a very just reason to resolve to attempt it no more. You had given me one great Encouragement before I had the honour to see you, and that was,

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by leaving off Writing your self. For Vanity is a greater Incitement to Poets than Pensions, and even Want depresses the Spirits less than the thought of being surpassed. Therefore while Mr. *Montague* sung, he sung alone. We admir'd indeed our Conquering Monarch, but we admir'd in Silence. We rever'd the Greatness of your Genius, and neglected our Talents. Indeed the Strength and Sweetness of your Voice was fit to charm us alone, and we, who followed, were only fit for the Chorus. But you have left a Province, which you have made your own, to the Administration of those who are under you, and are gone on in your victorious Progress to the Acquisition of new Glory. From which I am sensible that I detract by detaining you: For your Actions are your best Encomiums, and the loud Consent of the Nation your best Panegyrick. It was a glorious one that was spoken to you by the People of *Westminster*, in the Request that they made to you to serve as their Member in the present Parliament, at a time when they were Caballing all over the Kingdom, and Gentlemen were depriving Peasants of their little Reason, in order to obtain their Voices; Mr. *Montague's* Merit, while he was silent, solicited for him so importunately, that it prevail'd upon a number of considerable

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nable Inhabitants of the Politer Parts of the Town, to come and make it their humble Request to you, to Honour them by Representing them, which puts me in mind of a Saying of *De la Bruiere*, *That the People are then at their height of Happiness, when their King makes choice for his Confidants, and for his Ministers, of the very same Persons that the People would have chosen, if the Choice had been in their Power.* This at present, is our own Case; for doubtless the same People, who, without any Brigue or the least Corruption, came voluntarily to entreat you to suffer them to place you in the Great Council of the Kingdom, would, if the Choice had been in their power, have plac'd you in the Privy-Council; and they who frankly offer'd to trust you with the Disposal of the Mony which is in their Houses, would have trusted you, had it been in their power, with the Intendency of that in the Treasury. So that the Peoples Proffer to Chuse you, seems to me to be a loud Approbation of the Choice, which the King had made before of you, and of your Ministration upon that Choice. But I injure the Publick while I detain you: Yet give me leave to end with my zealous Wishes for you, that the Happiness may be multiplied on you, which you so nobly seek to communicate, that you may encrease

The Epistle Dedicatory.

in Riches and Honours faster than you advance in Years, till you arrive at that Height of Prosperity which may be answerable to your high Desert, and till Fortune may be said to pour down her Gifts upon you, in Emulation of Art and Nature: Yet Envy after all shall be forced to declare, that Mr. *Montague* sprung from an Illustrious Stock, and loaded with Plenty and Honours, is yet Nobler by Desert, than he is by Descent, and Greater by Virtue, than he is by Fortune;

I am, Sir,

Your most humble

and most obedient Servant,

JOHN DENNIS.

To

TO THE READER.

I Once resolved to have a long Preface before this little Book; but the Impression has been so long retarded by the fault of those who had the Care of it, that I have now neither time nor Humor to execute what I intended. I shall therefore only give a Compendious Account of what I proposed to have treated of more at large: I designed, in the first place, to have said something of the Nature and of the End of a Letter, and thought to have prov'd that the Invention of it was to supply Conversation, and not to imitate it, for that nothing but the Dialogue was capable of doing that; from whence I had drawn this Conclusion, That the Style of a Letter was neither to come quite up to that of Conversation, nor yet to keep at too great a distance from it. After that, I determined to shew, that all Conversation is not Familiar; that it may be Ceremonious, that it may be Grave, nay, that it may be Sublime, or that Tragedy must be allow'd to be out of Nature: That if the Sublime were easie and unconstrain'd, it may be as consistent with the Epistolary Style, as it was with the Dittique; that Voiture had admirably joyn'd it with one of them, and Longinus with both. After this, I resolv'd to have said something of those who had most succeeded in Letters amongst the Ancients and Moderns, and to have treated of their Excellences and their Defects: To have spoken more particularly of Cicero and Pliny amongst the Ancients, and amongst the Moderns of Balzac and Voiture; to have shewn that Cicero is too simple and too dry, and that Pliny is too affected, and too refin-

ned

To the Reader.

ned; that one of them has too much of Art in him, and that both of them have too little of Nature. That the Elevation of Balzac was frequently forced, and his Sublime affected; that his Thoughts were often above his Subject, and his Expression almost always above his Thoughts; and that whatsoever his Subjects were, his Style was seldom alter'd: that Voiture was easie and unconstrain'd, and natural when he was most exalted; that he seldom endeavoured to be witty at the Expence of right Reason: but that, as his Thoughts were for the most part true and just, his Expression was often defective, and that his Style was too little diversified. That for my own part, as I came infinitely short of the extraordinary Qualities of these great Men, I thought my self obliged to endeavour the rather to avoid their Faults; and that consequently I had taken all the care that I could, not to think out of Nature and good Sense, and neither to force nor neglect my Expressions; and that I had always taken care to suit my Stile to my Subject, whether it was Familiar or Sublime, or Didacticque; and that I had more or less varied it in every Letter. All this and more I designed to have said at large, which I have only hinted now in a hurry. I have nothing to add, but to desire the Reader to excuse my bad Performance, upon the account of my good Endeavour, and for striving to do well in a manner of Writing, which is at all times useful, at this time necessary; a manner in which the English would surpass both the Ancients and Moderns, if they would but cultivate it, for the very same Reason that they have surpassed them in Comedy. But methinks, I have a Title to the Reader's Favour, for I have more than made Amends for the Defects of my own Letters, by entertaining him with those of my Friends.

A

Collection of Letters,

Written by several Eminent Hands.

To Walter Moyle, Esq;

Dear Sir,

YOU know a grave Fellow assures us, that upon the Cessation of Oracles, lamentable Cries were heard in the Air, proclaiming along the Coasts the Death of the Great *Pan*: And have not you upon this Death of good Sence, and this Cessation of Wit! tell me truly; have not you heard

*These Sounds upon the Cornish Shore,
The Sage Will. Ur—— is no more?*

Gone is the universal Lord of WIT! He to whom all the Wits paid Homage; For whom his Subjects set a Tax upon Words, and laid exorbitant Customs on Thoughts: He's dead; alas, he's dead!

Dead, I mean, Sir, in a legal Capacity; that is, Outlaw'd and gone into the *Friars*;

A a a

to

2 *Letters on several Occasions.*

to go into which, is once more to Outlaw himself: He has done it, Sir, and ill Fortune has brought him to be a *Felo de se* that way. For since the Law thought it but just to put *Will* out of its Protection, *Will* thought it but prudent to put himself out of its Power. And since the Law could use him with so much Contempt, as to declare to all the World that it does not care for *Will*. *Ur.—*; *Will*, who is extreamly stout in Adversity, has declar'd by his Actions, That he does not care for the Law. *Virgil* tells us in his Sixth Book, That the Souls in Hell were bu-
fied about the same things in which they were employed upon Earth; even so does Sage *Will* use the same Nutmeg-grater, and the same Tea-pot in the *Friars*, that he handled before in *Bow-street*. Thus has he left the Wits without any Sorrow, tho he loves them, and without taking any Leave of them. For *Will* thinks they cannot be long from him; and he says, he expects that in a very little time his old Company should be constant at his New House. And dost not thou think that they too have reason to expect the very same thing? For as the death of any Man ought to put all his Friends in mind, that he went before but to lead them the way; so *Will's* Departure from this miserable Life, this lewd

Covent-

Letters on several Occasions. 3

Covent garden Life, and his Ferrying from *Somerset-stairs* to the infernal Shore of *Alsatia*, should be a *Memento* to the rest of the Wits, that he is but gone whither they all must follow.

To leave off Poetical Similies, this Body Politick is in a cursed Condition, and cannot keep long together without a Head. The Members are at present in a grave Debate how to get one. To morrow the whole House will resolve it self into a grand Committee, to consult about Ways and Means of making provision for the Common Necessities. Some talk of an Excise upon *May-Dew* and *Rasberry-brandy*: That there will be a Poll is strongly asserted, in which every Man is to pay according to his respective Condition. To Morrow it will be known to how much each Man's *Quota* amounts. As for Example: How much a Poet is to pay, how much a Wit, how much a Politician, and how much a Critick. A Critick did I say? I beg your Pardon: They have voted *Nemine Contradicente*, that they will Cess no Critick till Mr. *Moyle* returns.

I have given them my Sentiments upon the forementioned Poll, which were, That it was something hard to make a Man pay for being call'd, Wit, Poet, or Critick ;

4 *Letters on several Occasions.*

That they saw by Experience lately in the State, that poor Dogs grumbled to pay for their Titles. How then could they think that People would be contented to be tax'd for their Nick-names? That in settling this Tax, they were to take a quite contrary Method, to that which was taken upon settling a Tax in the State. That in the State, sometimes a Man paid for what he really had; As for Example, when a Country 'Squire paid for his Land or his Money; and sometimes for what he really had not, as when a Cit that is twice dubb'd, Knight by the King, and Cuckold by his Wife, pays for his Honour, and for his Children. The first of which is but as it were his, for it is really the Kings; and the Second of which are but as it were his, for they are really the Courtiers, who help'd him to his Title. In the State too a Man is made to pay for something which he does, or for something which he does not. As a *Jacobite* pays so much for Swearing when he's Drunk, and so much for not Swearing, when he's Sober. But that in our Case, if we would be exactly Just, we should make People pay neither for what they have, nor for what they have not; nor for what they do, nor for what they do not; But should oblige them to pay
only

Letters on several Occasions. 5

only for pretending to have what they really have not, or for offering to do, what they are utterly incapable of doing. That thus the Tax would certainly fall upon the most solvent part of the Body. For how ridiculous would it be to tax a Man for having Poetry and Wit, when they are almost always signs that he has not a Farthing to pay? On the other side, how absurd would it be to tax him for a bare want of those Qualities? since when a Man is dull without Pretending, 'tis ten to one but he is Poor, for Riches make Men vain, and Vanity makes them affected. But he who is not much at his ease, is hardly at leisure for Affectation; and I have often seen, that when Vanity has thrown a Fop out of Nature, Necessity has brought him back again: But a rich Rogue will be sure to be always Pretending. Fortune takes pleasure in making those Vain, whom Nature before made Impotent, and both of them often conspire to finish a Coxcomb. Thus I would have none pay but they who put Gravity upon us for Wisdom, Visions for Politicks, and Quibbles for Wit; and I would have no Man at any Expence for being call'd a Poet, a Wit, or a Critick, unless it be by himself. It would be equally hard to lay a Tax upon any one, for his Ill

6 *Letters on several Occasions.*

Fortune, or for his Ill-Nature, since they are things of which no Man is Master. But what? A Sot cannot help his Vanity. Agreed: But then it makes him so much happier than he deserves to be, that he may well be contented to pay for it.

I am your Most humble Servant,

JOHN DENNIS

To Mr. Wycherley, at Cleve, near Shrewsbury.

Sir,

WHILE I venture to write these Lines to you, I take it to be my Interest not to consider you, as I hitherto always have done, and as for the future I always shall, *viz.* As Mr. Wycherley, as the greatest Comick-Wit that ever *England* bred, as a Man sent purposely into the World to Charm the Ears of the wittiest Men, and to ravish the Hearts of the most Beautiful Women: No, Sir, that in writing to you I may assume some Spirit, I shall at present only consider you as the humble Hermit at *Cleve*; Humble even in the full Possession of all those extraordinary Qualities,

Letters on several Occasions. 7

ties, the knowledge of which has made me Proud. I must confess, that I have no great Opinion of that which Men generally call Humility. Humility in most Men is want of Heat; 'tis Phlegm, 'tis Impotence, 'tis a wretched Necessity, of which they who lie under it, vainly endeavour to make a Vertue. But in a Man of Mr. *Wycherley's* Make, 'tis Choice, 'tis Force of Mind, 'tis a good, 'tis a generous Condescension. And what Force of Mind is there not requisite to bend back a Soul by perpetual Reflection, which would be always rising, and eternally aspiring by virtue of its in-born Fire? Yet yours, notwithstanding all its Power, cannot wholly depress it self, nor descend in every part of it. At the time that your Will vouchsafes to stoop, your understanding soars; your Writings are as bold as your Conversation is modest, (though those are bold, as this is modest with Judgment) and he who would do you Justice, must needs confess, that you are a very ambitious Writer, though a very humble Man. Yet your very Ambition has oblig'd Mankind: It has exalted Humane Nature, in raising your own by its most noble Efforts; and that without boasting Preheminence. And surely it must be for this very reason that we feel a secret

8 *Letters on several Occasions.*

Pride, when we but read the Discoveries which you have made. Thus I cannot say what you are, without Vanity, for never was Man exempt from it ; but I can say, that you have made use even of Vanity to humble you by way of Reflection, and that you have avoided that dangerous Effect of it, Vain-glory, the Rock upon which several great Wits before you have been seen to split. For you have always wisely considered, that Vain-glory in the Vulgar, may be supportable, nay, may be diverting ; but that in great Men it must be intolerable. That whereas in the First, 'tis want of Discernment, 'tis Folly, 'tis the Extravagance and Blindness of Self-Love ; in the Last, 'tis Crime, 'tis Malice, 'tis a secret and proud Design to Mortifie and Insult over the rest of Men, over whom they have so much advantage ; That it is for this very reason, that we so deeply resent, and so severely revenge the mortal Affronts we receive from it. Great Wits were by Heav'n destin'd to Rule, to rule the Minds of others, the noblest Empire ; but when they grow outwardly Vain they grow Tyrants, and then their discontented Subjects rebel, and then they depose those Kings as Usurpers, whom before they obey'd as their lawful Monarchs. But

Letters on several Occasions. 9

a moderate, a good, and a gracious Prince, like you, commands their Hearts, as well as their Understandings, and under one whom they love so well, they grow as proud, as they are pleas'd to obey. Our violent Inclinations make us belong to you, and therefore 'tis the interest even of our Pride, that you should long continue in the Place which your extraordinary Desert has attain'd. Did we nothing but esteem you as much as we do, we should certainly envy you; if we did not hate you; for bare esteem is always forc'd upon us, whereas Inclination is much more voluntary: Besides, as a judicious French Man observes, Esteem is foreign, and comes from abroad, and is therefore received with Grumbling; but inclination is our own, and born in our Breasts, and is therefore Caress'd and Cherish'd. I might add, That upon this account it is hard to wish well to those whom we very much esteem, if they have not likewise the skill to make themselves be Belov'd; because barely to Esteem, depresses the Spirits, as much as to Love very much exalts them; it brings the Soul to a languid Temper, and gives it at once too horrid Views of another's Excellencies, and of its own Infirmities; but Affection gives it Agitation and Warmth; and

10 *Letters on several Occasions.*

and in the view of a Friend's Desert, it takes too much Pleasure, and too much Pride to consider its own Defects. 'Tis true, that you are esteem'd at this high rate, you owe to your Wit and your Penetration; but that you are esteem'd without Envy, that you are with Joy and Gladness esteem'd, you owe to this, that while the force of your Fancy and Judgment makes all the World admire you, you remain yourself unmov'd by it; that while your Excellence fills all Mouths but yours, you alone appear to be unacquainted with it. Thus, while by the Merit of your extraordinary Qualities, you are known to surpass all others, it plainly appears, that you have beyond all this, a Greatness of Soul, from whence you look down on your own Merit. An infallible Sign, that the Talents which we admire in you, are no Illusions, but real things, things that were born with you, and have been improv'd by you, and which you have not acquir'd: For Men are found to be Vainer, upon the account of those Qualities which they fondly believe they have, than of those which they really have; and Hereditary Greatness gives Men leave to be humble, whereas Preferment occasions Pride. None but such real Greatness as yours can capacitate a Man to be truly

Letters on several Occasions. II

truly humble ; for the Soul, which by Nature is not seated high, can hardly be said to descend. If I have insisted too long on this shining Subject, a Subject which is so conspicuous in you ; if you look upon this tedious Letter, as one of those various Persecutions which every eminent Vertue provokes ; I desire you to consider, that I have so many Obligations to this very Humility, that I look'd upon myself as oblig'd by Gratitude, to say as much as I have done. For to what I owe the happiness which I have frequently received in your Conversation, to that I owe the present Satisfaction, which your Permission to write to you gives me ; and to that I am indebted for the hopes of your Answers ; when I have received them I shall then believe what you were pleas'd to tell me when I saw you last, that you are much more Humble in the clear Air on your Mountain at *Cleve*, than when you are in Fog and Sulphurous Smoak in *Bow-street*. But at the same time, the Satisfaction of thinking that Distance does not make you forget me, will render him very Proud, who is at present,

S I R, Your very humble Servant,

JOHN DENNIS.

Mr.

12 *Letters on several Occasions.*

Mr. Wycherley's Answer to Mr. Dennis.

Dear Sir,

YOU have found a way to make me satisfy'd with my Absence from *London*; nay, what is more, with the Distance which is now betwixt you and me. That indeed uses to lessen Friendship, but gives me the greater Mark of yours, by your kind Letter, which I had miss'd if I had been nearer to you: So that I, who receive no Rents here, yet must own if I did, I cou'd not receive greater Satisfaction than I had from yours, worth even a Letter of Exchange, or Letters Patents; for I value your Friendship more than Money, and am prouder of your Approbation, than I should be of Titles: For the having the good Opinion of one who knows Mankind so well, argues some Merit in me, upon which every Man ought to consider himself more, than upon the Goods of Fortune. I had rather be thought your Friend in proof of my Judgment and good Sense, than a Friend to the Muses; and had rather have you than them thought mine. If I am as you say, at once Proud and Humble, 'tis since I have known I have had the Honour to please you; tho' your Praise rather humbles than

Letters on several Occasions. 13

than makes me (tho a damn'd Poet) more Vain. For it is so great, that it rather seems the railery of a witty Man, than the Sincerity of a Friend; and rather proves the Copiousness of your own Invention, than justifies the Fertility of mine. But I fear I am forfeiting the Character of *the Plain-Dealer* with you; and seem like vain Women, or vainer Men, to refuse Praise, but to get more; and so by returning your Compliments, shew my self grateful out of Interest, as Knaves are punctual in some Payments, but to augment their Credit. And for your Praise of my Humility (the only Mark of my Knowledge, since it is a Mark of my knowing my self,) you have prais'd that to its Destruction, and have given me so much, y^e have left me none; like those Admirers, who praise a young Maids Modesty till they deprive her of it. But let me tell you, 'tis not to my Humility that you owe my Friendship, but to my Ambition, since I can have no greater than to be esteem'd by you, and the World, your Friend, and to be known to all Mankind for,

Dear Sir, your humble Servant,

W. WYCHERLEY.

P O S T.

14 *Letters on several Occasions.*

POSTSCRIPT.

My Dear Friend,

I Have no way to shew my Love to you in my Absence, but by my Jealousie: I would not have my Rivals in your Friendship, the C——s, the D——s, the W——s, and the rest of your Tavern-friends, enjoy your Conversation, while I cannot: Tho', I confess, 'tis to their Interest to make you dumb with Wine, that they may be heard in your Company; tho' it were more the demonstration of their Wit to hear you, than to be heard by you. For my own part, I am ambitious of your Company alone in some Solitude, where you and I might be all one. For I am sure, if I can pretend to any Sence, I can have no Instruction or Satisfaction of Life, better than your Example and your Society.

My Service pray, to all my Friends; that is, to all yours whom I know: and be charitable (as often as you can) to the Absent; which you good Wits seldom are; I mean be charitable with your Letters to

Your humble Servant.

POST

POSTSCRIPT.

PRay let me have more of your Letters, tho' they would rally me with Compliments undeserv'd, as your last has done; for like a Country Esquire, I am in love with a Town Wit's Conversation, tho' it be but at a Distance that I am forced to have it, and tho' it abuses me while I enjoy it.

To Mr. Wycherley.

Dear Sir,

NOT long after I writ my last to you, I was hurried up to Town by a kind of a Cholick, which was ended in a Defluxion upon one of my Feet. You know, Sir, a Defluxion is a general name which some pleasant French Men have given an Infant-Goat, too young to be yet Baptiz'd. But tho' the Distemper rag'd in each Hand, I would in spite of it, answer your Admirable Letter, a Letter which I had certainly known to be yours, tho' it had been sent me without a Name, nay, and transcrib'd by a Chancery-Clerk in his own hideous manner of Copying. But I must
con-

16 *Letters on several Occasions.*

confess I was surpriz'd to hear you say in it, that you took the Sincerity of a Man who so much esteems you for Railery, yet tho' you declare it, you can never believe it. I am willing to believe you exceeding humble; but you can never be humble to that degree, unless your Mind, which resembles your Eye, in its Clearness, its Liveliness, and in its piercing Views, should be also like it in this, that plainly discerning all things else, it wants a sight of it self; but in this it does not resemble it: For it beholds it self by Reflections, and like a lovely Maid at her Glass, is charm'd with the sight of its own Beauty. This is a sight in which you take Pride as well as Pleasure; but yours I must confess, is a guiltless Pride, it being nothing but first Motion, which it is impossible for Man to avoid. You have both the Force to subdue it immediately, and the Art and Goodness to conceal it from us. That it plainly appears from what I have said, that you do not believe I had any design to rally you. I am confident that through all my Letter there appears an Air of Sincerity. But that is a Vertue which has been so long and so peculiarly yours, that you may perhaps be jealous of it in your Friends, and disclaim some Vertues which they commend in you only to Monopolize

Letters on several Occasions. 17

nopolize that. You had given me at least an occasion to think so, if the Railery in yours had not been so very apparent, that even I had Eyes to discern that you have been to blame in it, tho I am doubly blinded with Love of you and my self. Yet if you writ it with a design to Mortifie me, assure your self that I shall fortifie my Vanity with that very Artillery with which you have begun to attack it. If Mr. *Wycherley* rallies me, it is certain that I have my Defects; but it is full as certain, that he would never condescend to abuse me at such a distance if he wholly despis'd me. Thus, Sir, you see I am as reasonable with my Friend, as a *Russian* Spouse is with her Husband, and take his very railery for a Mark of Esteem, as she does a Beating for a proof of Affection. The very worst of your Qualities gain our Affections: Even your Jealousie is very obliging, which it could never be unless it were very groundless. But since your very Suspicion is obliging, what influence must your Kindness have on our Souls? The Wish that I were with you in some Retirement, is engaging to that degree, that I almost repent that I so eagerly desir'd your Conversation before. For if it were possible, I would augment that Desire, as a grateful return to yours. To be

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with

18 *Letters on several Occasions.*

with you in Solitude, would make me perfectly happy. Tho' it were in the *Orcades*, I would not wish my self remov'd to any happier Climate; no, not even to that which contain'd my absent Mistress; all that I could do for her on that occasion, would be to wish her with me. In that Retirement what should I not enjoy? Where I should be admirably instructed without Trouble, and infinitely delighted without Vice, where I should be glorious at once with Envy and Quiet. For what could be more glorious, than to be the Companion of your Retreat! My very Ambition instructs me to love such Solitude. Tho', properly speaking, there can be no Solitude where you reside: Immortal Company still attends you, and the Vertues, the Graces, and the Charming Nine, who love the Groves, and are fond of you, follow you to remotest Retirements. The Comick Muse is more particularly yours; and it is your peculiar Praise to allure the most Ravishing of all the Sisters after you into Retirement: To make that Goddess forsake the Crowd with you, who loves it most of the Nine: You have been constantly her Darling, her best Belov'd. Thus in Retirement with her and you, I should have the Conversation of Mankind; I should enjoy it with all its Advantages, with-

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without its least Inconveniencies. In the Philosophy of your Actions and Words, I should see the Wise, the Good, and the truly Great; in your Observations, and in your Railery, the Men of Sence, and the Men of Wit; and in your Satyr, severely pleasant, the Fools and Rascals expos'd by it. In the Postscript to my last, I made an Apology for usurping a Style so foreign from this way of Writing. I have once more run into the same Fault in this, but the very Thought of Mr. *Wycherley* spreads a generous Warmth thro' me, and raises my Soul to Rapture. And when a Man Writes, his Soul and his Style of necessity rise together. In my next, I have something with which I must trouble you, that will require another manner of Writing.

I am, &c.

To Mr. Wycherley.

Dear Sir,

I Have been very ill ever since I took my Leave of you, so that I parted in one Night from all that I valued most, that is, from my Health and you. However, Nature was kind, in not failing to supply me

B b b 2

with

20 *Letters on several Occasions.*

with Vigour, till Fortune had depriv'd me of your Conversation, and I was got amongst People with whom I had small occasion for Vigour. Yet even here in spite of Sickness and Absence, I have made a shift to converse with you: For I thought that your Works were the only things that could make me full amends for the loss of your Company: By them you have been able to give me Joy even in the midst of my Pain. For the *Country Wife*, and the *Plain Dealer* are Stores of Delight, which you have laid up by a noble Charity, to supply the Poor in Spirit through all Posterity. So that I believe that to be one of the Reasons of Fortune's Pique to you, that you have put it out of her power for the time to come, to prosecute her Quarrel to Men of Sense effectually: for by having recourse to you in your Works, they are sure to become more happy than Fools, even at the time when they are less successful. But I can hold up my Head no longer at present, as soon as I am better, you may expect a longer Letter from me.

I am Yours, &c.

Mr.

Mr. Wycherley to Mr. Dennis.

Dear Sir,

I Have received yours of the 20th of November, and am glad to find by it, that however your Friends are Losers by your Absence from the Town, you are a Gainer by it; of your Health, which every one you have left behind you, (but *Ch—*) may be thought a Friend to: and the more each Man is your Friend, the more he is satisfy'd with your Absence, which tho' it makes us ill for want of you, makes you well for want of us: your taking no Leave of me (which you would excuse) I take to be one of the greatest Kindnesses you ever shew'd me; for I could no more see a Departing Friend from the Town, than a Departing Friend from this Life; and sure 'tis as much Kindness and good Breeding to steal from our Friends Society unknown to em, (when we must leave 'em to their Trouble) as it is to steal out of a Room, after a ceremonious Visit, to prevent trouble to him, whom we would Oblige and Respect; so that your last Fault (as you call it) is like the rest of your Faults, rather an Obligation, than an Offence; tho' the greatest Injury indeed you can do your Friends, is to leave 'em against

B b b 3

their

22 *Letters on several Occasions.*

their Will, which you must needs do. You tell me you converse with me in my Writings, I must confels then you suffer a great deal for me in my Absence; which (tho' I I would have you love me) I would not have you do; but for your truer Diversion, pray change my *Country Wife* for a better of your own in the Country, and exercise your own *Plain Dealing* there, then you will make your Country 'Squire better Company, and your Parson more sincere in your Company than his Pulpit, or in his Cups: But when you talk of store of Delights, you find in my *Plain-Dealer*, you cease to be one; and when you commend my *Country Wife*, you never were more a Courtier; and I doubt not but you will like your next Neighbour's Country Wife better than you do mine, that you may pass your time better than you can do with my *Country Wife*; and like her Innocence more than her Wit, since Innocence is the better Bawd to Love; but enjoy my Wife and welcome in my Absence, I shall take it as civilly as a City Cuckold: I was sorry to find by you that your Head ach'd while you writ me your Letter; since I fear 'twas from Reading my Works (as you call them) not from your own Writing, which never gave you Pain, tho' it would to others to imitate it. I've given
your

Letters on several Occasions. 23

your Service to your Friends at the *Rose*, who, since your Absence, own they ought not to go for the Witty Club; nor is *Will's* the Wits Coffee-house any more, since you left it, whose Society for want of yours, is grown as Melancholy, that is, as dull as when you left them a Nights, to their own Mother-Wit, their Puns, Couplets, or Quibbles; therefore expect not a Witty Letter from any of them, no more than from me, since they, nor I have conversed with you these three Weeks. I have no News worth sending you, but my next shall bring you what we have. In the mean time let me tell you (what I hope is no News to you) that your Absence is more tedious to me, than a Quibler's Company to you; so that I being Sick Yesterday, as I thought without any Cause, reflected you were forty or fifty Miles off, and then found the reason of my Indisposition, for I cannot be well so far from you, who am,

My Dear Mr. Dennis,

Your obliged humble Servant,

W. WYCHERLEY.

POSTSCRIPT.

PRay pardon me that I have not sooner answer'd your Letter, for I have been

B b b 4

very

24 *Letters on several Occasions.*

very busie this last Week about Law-affairs, that is very Dull and Idle, tho' very Active. Your Friends of the Coffee-house and the *Rose*, whether Drunk or Sober, Good Fellows, or Good Wits, show at least their Sense, by valuing you and yours, and send you all their Service; and never are more Wits and less Poets, that is, less Lyars, than when they profess themselves your Servants.

For News, *W*—— lives soberly, *Ch*—— goes to Bed Early; *D'Urfey* sings now like a Poet, that is, without being ask'd: And all the Poets, or Wits-at-wills, since your departure, speak well of the Absent. *Ball*—— says his ill Looks proceed rather for want of your Company, than for having had that of his Mistress; even the Quibblers and Politicians, have no double Meaning when they speak well of you.

To Mr. wycherley.

Dear Sir,

THE sight of your Letter reviv'd me; It appear'd like the Rays of the new Sun, to one who has Winter'd under the Pole, and brought with it Light, Warmth, and

Letters on several Occasions. 25

and Spirit. The Railery in it was very Obliging; for the Lust of Praise is as powerful with Men, as the Itch of Enjoyment is with Women; and it is as hard for us to think that our Friends ridicule us when they commend our Wit, as it is for them to believe that their Gallants abuse them when they extol their Beauty. Yet generally in both Cases, whatever is said, is said for the Satisfaction of him that speaks it. But then, as he delights in Deceiving, the Person to whom he speaks, is deceiv'd with Pleasure, and both Parties are satisfied. But Mr. *Wycherley* is to be excepted from this general Rule, who commends his Friend for his Friend's sake. You never are witty to please your self, to whom Wit has so long been habitual, that you are often hardly mov'd your self when you say those admirable things with which we are transported. Not that I am so far betray'd by Vanity, as to take your Compliments at the foot of the Letter, or to suppose that you believ'd all that you said; but I am willing, for your sake, to believe that you meant something of it; and that not being without Kindness for me, (which is only owing to the sweetness of your Nature, that is, to your Merit, and not to mine;) your Reason, as the Duke *de la Roche*.

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Rocheboucaut says, has been bubbled by your Affection. And here, Sir, I have much the Advantage of you; for when I declare that I have the greatest Opinion in the World of you, none will mistrust my Sincerity, and all will applaud my Discernment; but you cannot express your Zeal at so high a rate for any Friend, but it must considerably lessen the World's Opinion of your Judgment. But if it is *Mr. Wycherley's* peculiar Praise, never to have shewn want of Judgment in any thing, unless in that only thing in which Error is honourable: How few are they who are capable of Erring at your Rate!

*Vellem in amicitia sic erraremus, & isti
Errori virtus nomen posuisset honestum.*

And how happy is the Man who has a Friend so accomplish'd, that Errour in him is Vertue? I am that happy Man, and am so far exalted by my Happiness, that I am never less humble, than when I subscribe my self,

Dear S I R,

Your most humble

and faithful Servant.

Mr.

Letters on several Occasions. 27

Mr. Wycherley's to Mr. — on the Loss of his Mistress.

Dear Sir,

I Have had yours of the 31st of *March*, to which I should sooner have returned an Answer, had I not been forced to take a little turnout of Town; but your Letter to me, brought me not more Satisfaction than your last to Mr. *Moyle* gave me Disquiet for you: Since by that I find how uneasie you are. You know, my Friend, from one sufficiently experienced in Love-disasters, that Love is often a kind of losing Loadam, in which the Loser is most often the Gainer. If you have been deprived of a Mistress, consider you have lost a Wife, and tho' you are disappointed of a short Satisfaction, you have likewise escaped a tedious Vexation, which Matrimony infallibly comes to be, one way or another; so that your Misfortune is an Accident which your true Friends should rather felicitate than commiserate. You told me in your last, that you were no more Master of your self: Then how should I help Rejoicing at the Restoration of your Liberty? A Man might as reasonably be sorry for his Friend's Recovery

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covery from Madness, as for his Recovery from Love, (tho' for the time a pleasant Frenzy;) so that your Mistress's Father, has rather been your Doctor than your Enemy: And you should not be angry with him, if he cures you of your Love-distemper, tho' by a Means a little too violent; for next to his Daughter's Cure of Love, his may prove the best. Well, pray be not angry, that I can be pleas'd with any thing that can so much displease you: I own my Friendship for you, has a little selfishness in it, for now you cannot be so happy as you wou'd in the Country, I hope you will make us as happy as we can be in the Town, which we shall be as soon as we have your company: For know, my Friend, change of Air after a Love-distemper, may be as good as 'tis after a Fever: and therefore make haste to Town, where a great many Doctors have engaged to compleat your Cure. Your Friends will do any thing to root out the Remains of your Passion. The Witty Club will grow Grave to instruct you; and the Grave Club will grow Gay to delight you; *Wh*— will turn a Philosopher; and I will grow a Good-Fellow, and venture my own Health, for the Recovery of your good Humour; for I had

Letters on several Occasions. 29

had rather be sick in your Company, than for want of it ; who am,

*Dear Sir, Your most unalterable Friend,
and humble Servant,*

W. WYCHERLEY.

POSTSCRIPT.

PRay pardon me for not writing to you before, or rather for writing to you so dully now, which I hope will be my best Excuse for my not writing sooner. All your Friends of the Coffee-house are well ; and what is no News to you, are, in spite of your Absence, your constant humble Servants.

The Answer to Mr. Wycherley.

Dear Sir,

I Have a colourable Excuse for my Silence, for when you went out of Town, you gave me the hopes of receiving a Letter from you, as soon as you arriv'd at *Cleve*. Besides, since that, I have been a Month in *Northamptonshire*. But the Inclination which I have to converse with Mr. *Wycherley*, is too violent to receive any Check from *Punctilio's*. But, alas, I was restrain'd by
too

30 *Letters on several Occasions.*

too just an Impediment: For ever since I saw you, I have been so rack'd by a cruel Passion, that I have had no Power to do any thing but to complain. And your Portion of Melancholy is not so small, that you have need to be troubled with another Man's Spleen. I would be sure to communicate my Happiness to my Friend, nay, I could be but half happy if I did not communicate it. As in Love I never could be pleas'd to a Height with my own pleasure, if I did not find that it added to that of my Mistress. But I should impart my ill Humour to my Friend, if I found that it were not in his power to ease me, and that it were much in his Inclination, with as much Regret, as I should acquaint him with his own ill Fortune, if I were clearly convinc'd that it were not in my power to assist him. You would not advise me to stifle this Passion. You are too well acquainted with Love, and me to do that: You know that that would be to perswade me to a thing which you are already sensible that I am very willing, and very unable to do. I blush while I show this Weakness, but sure there is some force of Mind requir'd to shew some sorts of Weakness. You remember the Maxim of the wise Duke: *La meme fermete qui sert a Resister al'amour, Sertaussi queque fois*

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a le rendre violent & durable. If that be true, I beseech you to believe that this obstinate Lover is a constant Friend too, and unalterably,

Dear Sir,

Tour most humble Servant.

Mr. Wycherley's Letter to Mr. ———.

Dear Sir,

I Lately received from you so kind, and so witty a Reproach for my not writing to you, that I can hardly repent me of my Fault, since it has been the Occasion of my receiving so much Satisfaction: But you have had a reasonable Excuse for your Silence, since you say I promis'd to write to you first, which is very true; and I had kept my Promise, but for my Conjecture that you could not stay so long out of *Nor-thamptonshire*; nor was I, it seems mistaken in that. But be assur'd, dear Sir, I think there can be no better End, or Design of my Writing, than in its procuring me the satisfaction of receiving something of yours: especially, since I have no other way left me now of Conversing with you. But it seems, you forbear to relieve me out of
Cha.

32 *Letters on several Occasions.*

Charity, since you say your Trouble was so great, that you were unwilling to communicate it to me, lest you should encrease mine. I see your Wit can do any thing, make an Omission of a Kindness a greater Obligation; and if you complain but to your Mistress, as wittily as you do to your Friend, I wonder not at her Cruelty, nor that she should take Pleasure to hear you Complain so long. But, my Friend, have a care of Complaining to her, with so much true Sence, lest it should disparage your true Love; and indeed, that I fear is the only Cause you are suffer'd to complain so long, without the Success which is due to your Merit. Love and Wit, from one who, you say, has her self so much; which, with your Pardon, I shall hardly believe, tho' you are her Voucher, if she does not do what you wou'd have her; that is, do you and herself Reason as fast as she can; since she must needs believe you a warm and sincere Lover, as much as I believe you a zealous and a true Friend. And I am so well acquainted with Love and you, that I believe no body is able to alter your Love, or advise your Reason; the one being as Unalterable as the other Infallible; and you (for ought I know) are the only Man who at once can Love and be Wise. And to the Wise you know a Word is enough;
espe-

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especially since you gave me a Caution against opposing your Passion; because it would be in vain. If Love be in you, as in other Men, a violent Passion, it is therefore a short Frenzy, and should be cur'd like other Distempers of that kind, by your Friends humouring it, rather than opposing it. Yet pardon me, if I prescribe the common Remedy of curing one Love with another. But whether you will let me be your Doctor or no, I must at least wish you well, who am,

Dear Sir, your most obliged affectionate

Friend and humble Servant,

W. WYCHERLEY.

POSTSCRIPT.

PRay thank my Friend Mr. W—— for putting his Surtout of a Letter over yours of a finer Stuff, as the Lining of a Garment is often finer than the Outside. Pray give all the honest Gentleman of the Coffee-house, of my Acquaintance and yours, my humble Service; whom, with you, I hope to see again, within this three Weeks, at London.

Ccc

Mr.

34 *Letters on several Occasions.*

Mr. Dennis to Mr. Wycherley.

Dear Sir,

A Man who has the Vanity of pretending to Write, must certainly love you extremely well, if he does not hate you after he has received from you such a Letter as yours: And he must undoubtedly shew a great deal of Friendship, when he assures you, he does not envy you the very Lines by which you commend him. A Man had need be very well acquainted with the goodness of your Nature, to be satisfied that you do not praise with a wicked Design to Mortifie. There are few Writers so humble, whom Mr. *Wycherley's* Commendation would not render vain; but then there are few Writers so proud, whom the Wit that Mr. *Wycherley* shews in commending them, would not humble. So that a Man who did not know you, wou'd be apt to believe, that whenever you write to Praise, you do but like a Wrestler, who lifts People up on purpose to throw them down, and the higher he raises them, makes their Fall the greater. Your Commendation is to a modest Man, what the second Bottle is to a sober Man; it raises his Vigour while he is swallowing it; but the

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the Wit is as sure to make the one Melancholy upon mature Reflection, as the Wine is certain to leave the other Spiritless after the third Concoction: But our Infirmary cannot be your fault; to whom we are oblig'd for your generous Intentions, which give you such a peculiar distinction from ordinary Men of Wit. Indeed, by a just and a noble Confidence, which you may repose in your self, you may always very safely commend; because you may be always sure to surpass. 'Tis prudent and noble at once in a Conqueror to extol the Conquered: to praise the Excellence which he o'ercomes, is but to commend himself: Besides, it wins the very Heart and Soul of him that is overcome, if he has but Virtue enough to be so subdued; and makes him willing to leave his last Retrenchment. It would long since have had that Effect upon me, if the rest of your good Qualities had not prevented it; which have so closely and so entirely tied me to you, that whenever I receive a Letter from you, my Vanity is sure to gain on the one side, what it is certain to lose on the other: For if I am mortified as to my own Wit, I do not fail to value my self upon yours.

I am, &c.

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To Mr. Wycherley, That a Block-head is better qualified for Business, than a Man of Wit.

Dear Sir,

THE last time I was at *Will's*, I had the Mortification to hear, that our Friend Mr.—— had met with a Disappointment in——; at which, some who were present, were glad, affirming, That Success would have thrown him out of his Element; for that a Man of Wit, is not qualified for Business so well as a Block-head: I have since had some Thoughts concerning that matter which I here send you, and of which I desire your Opinion.

Upon Reflection I have found out the following Reasons, why Block-heads are thought to be fittest for Business, and why they really succeed in it.

First, As their Brains are a great deal colder, than those are of Men of Wit, they must have but very strait Imaginations, and very barren Inventions; from whence it follows, that they have but very few Thoughts, and that a few Objects fill their Capacities.

Secondly, It is reasonable enough to believe, that since they are incapable of many Thoughts,

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Thoughts, those few which they have, are determin'd by their Necessities, their Appetites, and their Desires, to what they call their Fortunes and their Establishments.

Thiraly, It is not very hard to conceive that since a Block-head has but a few Thoughts, and perhaps but one all his Lifetime, which is his Interest, he should have it more perfect, and better digested, then Men of Wit have the same thought, who perhaps have a thousand every Hour.

Fourthly, It is easie to comprehend, that since such a one has but a few Thoughts, or perhaps but one, which by often revolving in his Mind, he has digested, and brought to perfection, he should readily pass from Thought to Action. For he must grow weary of thinking so often of one and the same thing; and since the Nature of the Soul requires Agitation, as soon as his little Speculation ceases, he must of necessity act to divert himself.

Fifthly, It will be certainly found, that as a little Thought often makes a Man active in Business, so a little Judgment often makes him diligent; for he may well be eager in the pursuit of those things, on which, seduced by Passion and vulgar Opinion, he sets an exorbitant Value; and concerning whose Natures and Incertainty, he is not

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very capable of making solid Reflections. For tho' Prudence may oblige a Man to secure a Competency, yet never was any one by right Reason induced to seek Superfluities.

Sixthly, Penury of Thoughts supposes Littleness of Soul, which is often requisite for the succeeding in Business: For a Block-head is sordid enough to descend to Trick and Artifice, which in Business are often necessary to procure Success; unless they are more than supplied, by a Prudence deriv'd from a consummate Experience, or from a great Capacity.

Thus have I endeavour'd to give the Reason, why a Fool succeeds better in Business than a Man of Wit; who has a multitude of Thoughts, and which fly at the noblest Objects; and who finds that there is something so pleasing, and so noble, in Thinking rightly, and more especially in the sublime Speculations of exalted Reason, that he finds it intolerably irksome to descend to Action, and abhors the very thought of being diligent in things, for which he has an extream Contempt.

Thus you see, that in some measure a Fool may be said to be better fitted out for Business, than a Man of Wit. But it is high time to distinguish: For, first, when

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I say, that a Block-head is fitted for Business, I mean only for little Business: For to affirm, that he is qualified for Affairs that require Extent of Capacity, would be a Contradiction in Terms. Secondly, When I affirm, that a Man of Wit is less capacitated for Business, I mean, that he is less so, as long as he keeps in his natural Temper, and remains in a State of Tranquility: But if once he comes to be thrown out of that by the force of a violent Passion, and fir'd with Zeal for his Country's Service, or enflam'd by Ambition, and Business can be made subservient to the gratifying of those Passions, then I dare boldly affirm, that one Man of Wit will go further than a thousand of those who want it. Of which it would be easie to give more than one Instance amongst our present Ministers. But I will be contented with putting you in mind, that none of the Romans had more Wit than *Cæsar*, and none of the French than *Richelieu*.

Before I conclude, I must give you a Caution; which is, that by the word Block-head, I do not mean one that is stupid, but that I apply that word according to the Language of you Men of Wit, to one who thinks but a little: And that on the other side, by a Man of Wit, I do mean eve-

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ry Coxcomb whose Imagination has got the Ascendant of his little Reason; but a Man like you, Sir, or our most ingenious Friend, in whom Fancy and Judgment are like a well-match'd Pair; the first like an extraordinary Wife, that appears always Beautiful and always Charming, yet is at all times Decent, and at all times Chast; the second like a prudent and well-bred Husband, whose very Sway shews his Complaisance, and whose very Indulgence shews his Authority.

I am, Dear Sir, your most humble Servant,

JOHN DENNIS.

To Mr. Dryden,

Sir,

THO' no man writes to his Friend with greater Ease, or with more Cheerfulness, than my self; and tho' I have lately had the Presumption to place you at the Head of that small Party, nevertheless, I have experienc'd, with Grief, that in writing to you, I have not found my old Facility.

Since I came to this Place, I have taken up my Pen several times, in order to write
to

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to you, but have constantly at the very beginning found my self damp'd and disabled; upon which I have been apt to believe that extraordinary Esteem may sometimes make the mind as Impotent as a violent Love does the Body, and that the vehement Desire we have to exert it, extreamly decays our Ability. I have heard of more than one lusty Gallant, who, tho' he could at any time, with Readiness and Vigour, possess the Woman whom he lov'd but moderately, yet when he has been about to give his Darling Mistress, whom he has vehemently and long desir'd, the first last Proof of his Passion, has found on a sudden that his Body has jaded and grown resty under his Soul, and gone backward the faster, the more he has spurr'd it forward. Esteem has wrought a like Effect upon my Mind; my extraordinary Inclination to shew that I honour you at an extraordinary rate, and to shew it in words that might not be altogether unworthy Mr. *Dryden's* Perusal, incapacitates me to perform the very Action to which it incites me, and Nature sinks in me under the fierce Effort. But I hope you will have the Goodness to pardon a Weakness that proceeds from a Cause like this, and to consider that I had pleas'd you more if I had honour'd you less. Who knows
but

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but that yet I may please you, if you encourage me to mend my Fault? To which, if you know but the Place I am in, Charity would engage you, tho' Justice could not oblige you: For I am here in a Defart, depriv'd of Company, and depriv'd of News; in a Place where I can hear nothing at all of the Publick; and what proves it ten times more a Defart, nothing at all of you: For all who are at present concern'd for their Country's Honour, hearken more after your Preparatives, than those for the next Campaign. These last may possibly turn to our Confusion, so uncertain are the events of War; but we know that whatever you undertake, must prove Glorious to *England*; and tho' the *French* may meet with Success in the Field, by you we are sure to Conquer them. In War there are a thousand unlook'd-for Accidents which happen every Day, and Fortune appears no where more like her self; but in a Combat of Wit, the more Humane Contention, and the more Glorious Quarrel, Merit will be always sure to prevail: And therefore, tho' I can but hope that the Confederate Forces will give Chase to *De Lorge* and *Luxemburg*, I am very confident that *Boileau* and *Racine* will be forced to submit to you. Judge therefore, if I, who very much love my Coun-

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Country, and who so much esteem you, must not with a great deal of Impatience expect to hear from you.

I am, Sir, Your most humble Servant.

To Mr. Dryden.

Dear Sir,

YOU may see already by this presumptuous Greeting, that Encouragement gives us as much assurance to Friendship, as it imparts to Love: You may see too, that a Friend may sometimes proceed to acknowledge Affection, by the very same Degrees by which a Lover declares his Passion. This last, at first, confesses Esteem, yet owns no Passion but Admiration: But as soon as he is animated by one kind Expression, his Look, his Style, and his very Soul are altered; but as Sovereign Beauties know very well, that he who confesses he Esteems and Admires them, implies that he Loves them, or is inclin'd to Love them; a Person of Mr. Dryden's exalted Genius, can discern very well, that when we Esteem him highly, 'tis Respect restrains us if we say no more. For where great Esteem is without Affection, 'tis often attended

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tended with Envy, if not with Hate; which Passions detract, even when they commend, and Silence is their highest Panegyric. 'Tis indeed impossible that I should refuse to Love a Man, who has so often given me all the Pleasure that the most insatiable Mind can desire; when at any time I have been dejected by Disappointments, or tormented by cruel Passions, the Recourse to your Verses, has calm'd my Soul, or rais'd it to Transports which made it condemn Tranquility. But tho' you have so often given me all the Pleasure I was able to bear, I have reason to complain of you on this account, that you have confin'd my Delight to a narrower compass: *Suckling*, *Cowly*, and *Denham*, who formerly ravish'd me in every part of them, now appear tasteless to me in most; and *Waller* himself, with all his Gallantry, and all that admirable Art of his Turns, appears three quarters Prose to me. Thus 'tis plain that your Muse has done me an Injury; but she has made me Amends for it: for she is like those extraordinary Women, who, besides the Regularity of their charming Features, besides their engaging Wit, have secret, unaccountable enchanting Graces, which tho' they have been long and often enjoy'd, make them always New, and always Desirable.

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firable. I return you my hearty Thanks for your most obliging Letter. I had been very unreasonable if I had repin'd that the Favour arriv'd no sooner: 'Tis allowable to grumble at the delaying a Payment, but to murmur at the Deferring a Benefit, is to be impudently Ungrateful beforehand. The Commendations which you give me, exceedingly sooth my vanity: For you with a Breath can bestow or confirm Reputation; a whole numberless People proclaims the Praise which you give, and the Judgment of three mighty Kingdoms appear to depend upon yours. The People gave me some little Applause before; but to whom, when they are in Humour, will they not give it? and to whom, when they are Forward will they not refuse it? Reputation with them depends upon Chance, unless they are guided by those above them. They are but the Keepers as it were of the Lottery which Fortune sets up for Renown; upon which Fame is bound to attend with her Trumpet, and Sound when Men draw the Prizes. Thus I had rather have your Approbation than the Applause of Fame: Her Commendation argues good Luck, but Mr. *Dryden's* implies Desert. Whatever low Opinion I have hitherto had of my self, I have so great a Value for your Judgment,

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ment, that, for the sake of that, I shall be willing henceforward to believe that I am not wholly Desertless ; but that you may find me still more Supportable, I shall endeavour to compensate whatever I want in those glittering Qualities, by which the World is dazled, with Truth, with Faith, and with Zeal to serve you ; Qualities which, for their Rarity, might be Objects of Wonder, but that Men dare not appear to admire them, because their Admiration would manifestly declare their want of 'em. Thus, Sir, let me assure you, that tho' you are acquainted with several Gentlemen, whose Eloquence and Wit may capacitate them to offer their Service with more Address to you, yet no one can declare himself with greater Cheerfulness, or with greater Fidelity, or with more profound Respect than my self,

Sir, Your most, &c.

Mr. Dryden to Mr. Dennis.

My Dear Mr. Dennis,

WHEN I read a Letter so full of my Commendations, as your last, I cannot but consider you as the Master of a vast

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vast Treasure, who, having more than enough for your self, are forc'd to Ebb out upon your friends. You have indeed the best Right to give them, since you have them in Propriety; but they are no more mine when I receive them, than the Light of the Moon can be allowed to be her own, who shines but by the Reflection of her Brother. Your own Poetry is a more powerful Example, to prove that the Modern Writers may enter into Comparison with the Ancients, than any which *Perrault* could produce in *France*; yet neither he, nor you, who are a better Critick, can persuade me that there is any room left for a solid Commendation at this time of Day at least for me. If I undertake the Translation of *Virgil*, the little which I can perform will shew at least, that no Man is fit to write after him, in a barbarous modern Tongue: Neither will his Machines be of any service to a Christian Poet. We see how ineffectually they have been try'd by *Tasso*, and by *Ariosto*. 'Tis using them too dully if we only make Devils of his Gods: As if, for Example, I would raise a Storm, and make use of *Æolus*, with this only Difference of calling him Prince of the Air, what Invention of mine would there be in this? or who would not see *Virgil* thorough me,
only

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only the same Trick play'd over again by a bungling Jugler? *Boileau* has well observed, that it is an easie matter, in a Christian Poem, for God to bring the devil to Reason. I think I have given a better Hint for new Machines, in my Preface to *Juvenal*, where I have particularly recommended two Subjects, one of King *Arthur's* Conquest of the *Saxons*, and the other of the *Black Prince* in his Conquest of *Spain*. But the Guardian Angels of Monarchies, and Kingdoms, are not to be touch'd by every Hand. A Man must be deeply conversant in the Platonick Philosophy to deal with them: And therefore I may reasonably expect that no Poet of our Age will presume to handle those Machines, for fear of discovering his own Ignorance; or if he should, he might perhaps be Ingrateful enough, not to own me for his Benefactor. After I have confess'd thus much of our Modern Heroick Poetry, I cannot but conclude with Mr. *Rym*——, that our English Comedy is far beyond any thing of the Ancients. And notwithstanding our Irregularities, so is our Tragedy. *Shakespear* had a Genius for it; and we know, in spite of Mr. *R*—— that Genius alone is a greater Virtue (if I may so call it) than all other Qualifications put together. You see what
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Success this learned Critick has found in the World, after his Blaspheming *Shakespeare*. Almost all the Faults which he has discover'd are truly there; Yet who will read Mr. *Rym*——, or not read *Shakespeare*? For my own part, I reverence Mr. *Rym*'s Learning, but I detest his Ill Nature and his Arrogance. I indeed, and such as I, have reason to be afraid of him, but *Shakespeare* has not. There is another part of Poetry in which the English stand almost upon an equal Foot with the Ancients; and 'tis that which we call Pindarique; introduced, but not perfected, by our Famous Mr. *Cowley*: And of this, Sir, you are certainly one of the greatest Masters: You have the Sublimity of Sence as well as Scund, and know how far the Boldness of a Poet may lawfully extend. I could wish you would cultivate this kind of Ode; and reduce it either to the same Measure which *Pindar* us'd, or give new Measures of your own. For, as it is, it looks like a vast Tract of Land newly Discover'd. The Soil is wonderfully Fruitful, but Unmanur'd, overstock'd with Inhabitants, but almost all Salvages, without Laws, Arts, Arms, or Policy. I remember poor *Nat. Lee*, who was then upon the Verge of Madness, yet made a sober, and a witty Answer to a

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bad Poet, who told him, *It was an easie thing to write like a Madman.* No, said he, *'tis very difficult to write like a Madman; but 'tis a very easie matter to write like a Fool.* Otway and He are safe by Death from all Attacks, but we poor Poets Militant (to use Mr. Cowley's Expression) are at the Mercy of wretched Scriblers: and when they cannot fasten upon our Verses, they fall upon our Morals, our Principles of State and Religion. For my Principles of Religion, I will not justifie them to you: I know yours are far different. For the same reason, I shall say nothing of my Principles of State: I believe you in yours follow the Dictates of your Reason, as I in mine do those of my Conscience. If I thought my self in an Error, I would retract it; I am sure that I suffer for them; and *Milton* makes even the Devil say, That no Creature is in love with Pain. For my Morals betwixt Man and Man, I am not to be my own Judge; I appeal to the World if I have Deceiv'd or defrauded any Man: And for my private Conversation, they who see me every day, can be the best Witnesses, whether or no it be Blameless and Inoffensive. Hitherto I have no reason to complain that Men of either Party shun my Company. I have never been an

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impudent Beggar at the Doors of Noble Men: My Visits have indeed been too rare to be unacceptable; and but just enough to testify my Gratitude for their Bounty; which I have frequently received, but always unask'd, as themselves will Witness. I have written more than I needed to you on this Subject: For I dare say, you justify me to your self. As for that which I first intended for the principal Subject of this Letter, which is my Friend's Passion, and his Design of Marriage, on better consideration I have chang'd my Mind: For having had the Honour to see my dear Friend *Wycherley's* Letter to him on that Occasion, I find nothing to be added or amended. But as well as I love Mr. *Wycherley*, I confess I love my self so well, that I will not shew how much I am inferior to him in Wit and Judgment, by undertaking any thing after him. There is *Moses* and the Prophets in his Counsel. *Jupiter* and *Juno*, as the Poets tell us, made *Tiresias* their Umpire, in a certain merry Dispute, which fell out in Heav'n betwixt them: *Tiresias* you know had been of both Sexes, and therefore was a proper Judge; our Friend Mr. *Wycherley* is full as competent an Arbitrator: He has been a Batchelor, and Marry'd Man, and is now a Widower. *Virgil* says of *Ceneus*,

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Nunc

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*Nunc vir nunc Fæmina Ceneus,
Rursus & in veterem fato revoluta figuram.*

Yet, I suppose, he will not give any large Commendations to his middle State ; nor as the Sailor said, will be fond, after a Shipwreck, to put to Sea again. If my Friend will adventure after this, I can but wish him a good Wind, as being his ; and,

My dear Mr. Dennis, your most Affectionate and most Faithful Servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

Written for my Lady C——; to her Cousin W. of the Temple. By Mr. Dennis.

After she had received from him a Copy of Verses on her Beauty.

Cousin,

I Received yours with the Verses inclos'd, and here return you my hearty Thanks for the Face, the Shape, the Meen, which you have so generously bestow'd upon me. From looking upon your Verses, I went to my Glass : But, Jesu ! the Difference ! Tho' I bought it to Flatter me, yet compar'd

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to you I found it a Plain Dealer: It shew'd me immediately, that I have been a great deal more beholding to you, than I have been to Nature; for she only Form'd me not Frightful; but you have made me Divine. But as you have been a great deal kinder than Nature has been to me, I think my self oblig'd, in Requitall, to be a good deal more Liberal than Heav'n has been to you, and to allow you as large a Stock of Wit as you have giv'n me of Beauty: Since so honest a Gentleman as your self, has stretch'd his Conscience to commend my Person, I am bound in Gratitude to do Violence to my Reason, to extol your Verses. When I left the Town, I desir'd you to furnish me with the News of the Place, and the first thing I have receiv'd from you, is a Copy of Verses on my Beauty; by which you dextrously infer, that the most extraordinary piece of News you can send me, is to tell me, that I am Handsom. By which ingenious Inference, you had infallibly brought the Scandal of a Wit upon you, if your Verses had not stood up in your Justification. But tell me truly, Cousin, could you think that I should prove so easie a Creature as to believe all that you have said of me? How could you find in your Heart to make such a Fool of me, and such a Cheat

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of your self ; to intoxicate me with Flattery, and draw me in to Truck my little stock of Wit and Judgment, for a meer Imagination of Beauty ; when the real thing too, falls so infinitely short of what you would make me exchange for the very Fancy of it ? For, Cousin, there is this considerable Difference between the Merit of Wit and Beauty : That Men are never violently influenc'd by Beauty, unless it has weaken'd their Reason ; and never feel half the force of Wit, unless their Judgments are sound. The principal time in which those of your Sex admire Beauty in ours, is between Seventeen and Thirty ; that is, after they are past their Innocence, and before they are come to their Judgment. And now, Cousin, have not you been commending a pretty Quality in me, to admire which, as I have just shewn you, supposes not only a corrupted Will, but a raw Understanding : Besides, how frail, how transitory is it ! Nature deprives us of it at Thirty, if Diseases spare it till then : By which constant Proceeding, she seems to imply, that she gives it us as a Gugaw to please us in the Childhood of our Reasons ; and takes it from us, as a thing below us, when we come to Years of Discretion. Thus, Cousin, have you been commending a
Qua-

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Quality in me, which has nothing of true Merit in it, and of which I have no greater a share, than to keep me from being Scandalous. So that all I could have got by your Kindness, if I had parted with my Judgment, in order to reap the Benefit of it, had been nothing but wretched Conceit, and ridiculous Affectation. If I thought you had enough of the gallant Man in you, to take what I say in good part, I would advise you to engage no further in Poetry: Be rul'd by a Woman for once, and mind your *Cook* upon *Littleton*. Rather Pettifog than Flatter: For if you are resolved to be a Cheat, you will show at least some Conscience, in resolving rather to chouse People of their Money, than to bubble them of their Understandings. Besides, Cousin, you have not a Genius which will make a Great Poet, and be pleased to consider, that a small Poet is a Scandalous Wight; that indifferent Verses are very bad ones; and that an insipid Panegyric upon another, is a severe Libel upon your self. Besides, there will start up a Satyr one day, and then Woe be to cold Rhimers. Old *England* is not yet so barren, but there will arise some generous Spirit, who, besides a Stock of Wit and good Sence, which are no very common Qualities, will not

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only be furnished with a sound Judgment, which is an extraordinary Talent; but with a true Taste for Eloquence and Wit, which is scarce any where to be found; and which comprehends not only a just Discernment, but a fine Penetration, and a delicate Criticism. Such a Satyrift as this, Cousin, must arise, and therefore you had best take care, by a judicious Silence, that whenever he appears, he may be sure to Divert you, and not Afflict you,

I am, &c.

To Mr. ———, at Will's Coffee-house in Covent-garden.

I Received your Panegyrick upon Pun's, which I so approve of, that I am resolved to get it Printed, and bound up with *Erasmus* his Praise of Folly. Yet to confess a Truth, I was something dissatisfied to see Quibbling commended with so much Wit: For nothing can be writ with more Wit, than your Letter to the reserve of the Quibbles; which I suppose you inserted amongst so many things which are so finely said, lest these should have render'd you too vain, or too much have mortify'd me:
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But pray, after this Panegyrick upon Quibbles, give me leave to ask you the same Question that the *Lacedæmonians* ask'd the Sophister, who harangu'd in the praise of *Hercules*: By the way, did you ever expect to hear a Quibble compar'd to *Hercules*? There's a Simile for you, *I think*, as *Novel* says, *that's New*. You, who are cry'd up for so great a Wit, tell me, without Envy, could you ever have thought upon that? But to return to my Question: Here you have spent a great deal of time in the Defence of Quibbles. Who said a Word against them? The Devil a Syllable did I mention of them in mine. It is true, I cited honest Mr. Sw——, but it is a hard Case, if the Quoting an Author, must be construed the Condemning his Works: I have a great Respect and Kindness for Mr. Sw——, as I have for all who have any Excellence. And truly, I think, that for the Management of Quibbles and Dice, there is no Man alive comes near him. And let me tell you, Sir, for all your new Emulation, he is a better Quibbler than you. But it is high time to give over Railery: For if you were my Father a thousand times, let me die if I would not rigorously examin that part of your Letter which pretends to defend Quibbling. You say that I am too Nice, and
that

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that my Aversion has something in it, that is very like Affectation: But here you must give me leave to turn your own Simile upon you: Can a Man be justly accus'd of Niceness or Affectation, because he appears offended at a Stink? When I tell you that Quibbling is extreamly foolish; you know it is foolish enough, you reply; but it is a foolish thing that diverts. And do you think this knowledge of it will excuse the Folly? Give me leave to resume the aforementioned Simile: Suppose a Fellow who breaks Wind, should say to the Company, while they are cajoling their offended Noses with Snuff, Look you Gentlemen, I know I am a brutal Dog for this, this is very nasty, but Begad it is very Diverting: Would the Excuse, think you, be current? A Quibble diverts: Right; and so does a Hobby-horse, which in my Mind, for those who can be diverted without Reason, is the better Bawble of the two. A Quibble diverts: Jesu! That this should be spoken at *Will's*? Can there be a more damnable Satyr upon Wit, than that so many Gentlemen who have so very much of it, should be forc'd to play the Fool to divert one another? But, for God's sake, what do you mean when you say a Quibble diverts you? It makes you laugh, I warrant: Why the great-

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greatest Coxcomb about the Town shall out-do you in Laughing at any time. Nature, who has dealt impartially with her Children, and who has given them but two Distinctions from Beasts, Reason and Laughter, has, where she has bestow'd the more of the One, conferr'd the less of the Other : And therefore a Coxcomb will laugh at nothing. Ay, that indeed, say you, is a sign of a Fool. Well, my dear Friend, I have so much Kindness for thee, that out of thy own Mouth thou shalt not be Judged: For if a Quibble is not Wit, it is nothing. But it is at as great a distance from wit, as an Idol is from the Deity; and I will no more believe nauseous Equivocals to be Wit, because some Sots have admir'd them, than I will believe Garlick to be God, because the *Ægyptians* ador'd it: Nay, it is a more damnable Sign of Stupidity in an English Man, to make Wit of a Quibble, than it was in the *Ægyptians* to make a God of their Garlick. But to return from whence I digressed; I have never appear'd so much a Stoick, but that I have been as much for Diversion as any of you: But then am I for the Diversion of reasonable Men, and of Gentlemen. If there be any Diversion in Quibbling, it is a Diversion of which a Fool and a Porter
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is as capable as is the best of you. And therefore *Ben. Johnson*, who writ every thing with Judgment, and who knew the Scum of the People, whenever he brings in a Porter or Tankard-bearer, is sure to introduce him Quibbling. But if Punning be a Diversion, it is a very strange one: There is as much Difference between the silly Satisfaction which we have from a Quibble, and the ravishing Pleasure which we receive from a beautiful Thought, as there is betwixt a faint Salute and Fruition. But what would you have us do? you cry. Men of the greatest Parts are no more to be found with wit always about them, than rich Rogues with always the Ready. Why, look you, Sir, as the first Step to Wisdom is to be freed from Folly; so the first Approach to Wit, is a contempt of Quibbling. If it happens at any time that you have not your Wit about you, we will either have patience till such time as you have, or take good Sense in the lieu of it: If you are not in a Condition to delight us, we will be contented to be Instructed; we will make your Instruction nourish our Vanity, so turn even that to Delight. Nay, there is something noble in right Reason, and consequently something delightful. Truth is so divinely beautiful, that it must please eternally;

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eternally ; but Falshood is base, and must shock all generous Minds, and every Equivocal is but ambiguous Falshood, that is the pitiful'st, the basest of Falshood.

To Walter Moyle Esq;

Dear Sir,

THO' you are already indebted a Letter to me, yet I think fit to give you Credit for another; tho' perhaps you may little desire to run into Debt this way: But it is for two Reasons that I give you the trouble of this: For, in the first place, I am taking a turn for a little time into the Country, and I design that the Prevention of this, should make some Amends for the Delay of my next. In the Second place, I have made some provision of Scandal, which I am willing to make use of, before it grow stale upon my hands. Just after I writ my last, I threw my self into a detach'd Party, which march'd from *Will's* to *Namur*; with the same Design that the Volunteers went to *Brest*, to keep out of the Fray, and be Spectators of the Action. However, before they were come to Blows, I went amongst the Tents, and had some Discourse

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Discourse with Major-General *R*—, whom I found to be Father to Mr. *Bays* his *Parthenope*. For the Major-General is a very honest Fellow, who sells Ale by the Town-Wall: We had the Satisfaction to see that the Town was taken, and the whole Siege was carried on as Sieges generally are, with a great deal more Noise than Mischief. On *Monday* last, which was the Second of *September*, I travell'd into the City, where I had the Satisfaction to see two very ridiculous Sights. The first was a Bawd carted for an Action which had some Relation to that memorable Day: for she was convicted of being an Accomplice in setting Fire to an Ancient and Venerable Pile of the City; that is, she was found Guilty of being instrumental in the Clapping an Alderman. I stood in a Book-seller's Shop to see her pass, which Book-seller was packing up some Scoundrel Authors, to send them away to the Plantations. These Authors are Criminals, which being sentenc'd to be Burnt here, have at last found Grace, and got off with Transportation. You remember the terrible News that we heard at *P*——, which, as it sprung from a ridiculous Occasion, that is, my Lady Mayorefs's Gossiping has had a comical Consequence. For the Common-Coun-

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Council have made an Order, by which my Lady Mayoress is dispens'd during the Wars, from seeing those Children born in the City, which are got in the Suburbs; that is, from being present at one of their Wive's Labours. But 'tis time to return to the Fair. Last Night I took a turn in the Cloisters, where I was entertain'd with a great many Dialogues between Vizour and Vallancy Wig, upon which I leave you to be Judge, whether my Eyes or my Ears were the better entertain'd of the two. For I heard a great deal of Unintelligible Language address'd to a great many Invisible Faces. As if, because the Women had resolv'd not to be seen, the Men had determin'd not to be Understood; and had in revenge eclips'd the Light of their Understanding by Fustian, as the others had obscur'd the Lustre of their Eyes by Velvet. Formerly the Ladies made use of White and Red to attract, but within these thirty Years black has succeeded, and the Devil is found more Tempting in his proper Colour. I have neither time nor place for any more: you shall have the rest by the first Opportunity.

Tours, &c.

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To Mr. Congreve.

Dear Sir,

I Have now read over the Fox, in which, tho' I admire the Strength of *Ben. Johnson's* Judgment, yet I did not find it so accurate as I expected : For first the very thing upon which the whole Plot turns, and that is, the Discovery which *Mosca* makes to *Bonario* ; seems to me, to be very unreasonable. For I can see no Reason why he should make that Discovery which introduces *Bonario* into his Master's House. For the Reason which the Poet makes *Mosca* give in the ninth Scene of the third Act , appears to be a very absurd one. Secondly, *Corbaccio*, the Father of *Bonario*, is expos'd for his Deafness, a Personal Defect ; which is contrary to the end of Comedy-Instruction : For personal Defects cannot be amended ; and the exposing such, can never divert any but half-witted Men. It cannot fail to bring a thinking Man to reflect upon the Misery of Human Nature and into what he may fall himself without any Fault of his own. Thirdly, The Play has two Characters, which have nothing to do with the Design of it, which are to be look'd upon as Excrescencies. Lastly

The

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the Character of *Volpone* is inconsistent with it self: *Volpone* is like *Catiline*, *Alieni appetens, sui profusus*; but that is only a Double in his Nature, and not an inconsistency. The inconsistency of the Character appears in this, that *Volpone* in the fifth Act behaves himself like a giddy Coxcomb, in the Conduct of that very Affair which he manag'd so Craftily in the first four. In which the Poet offends, first, against that fam'd Rule which *Horace* gives for the Characters,

*Servetur ad imum,
Qualis ab incepto processerit, & sibi constet.*

And, Secondly, Against Nature, upon which all the Rules are grounded: For so strange an Alteration in so little a time, is not in Nature, unless it happens by the Accident of some violent Passion; which is not the Case here. *Volpone* on the sudden behaves himself without common Discretion, in the Conduct of that very Affair which he had manag'd with so much Dexterity for the space of three Years together. For why does he disguise himself? Or, why does he repose the last Confidence in *Mosca*? Why does he cause it to be given out that he's dead? Why, only to plague

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his Bubbles. To plague them, for what? Why only for having been his Bubbles. So that here is the greatest Alteration in the World, in the space of twenty four Hours, without any apparent Cause. The Design of *Volpone* is to Cheat, he has carried on a Cheat for three Years together, with Cunning and with Success: and yet he, on a sudden, in cold Blood, does a thing which he cannot but know must endanger the ruining all.

I am, Dear S I R,

Your most humble Servant.

To Mr. Congreve.

Dear Sir,

I Will not augment the Trouble which I give you, by making an Apology for not giving it you sooner. Tho' I am heartily sorry that I kept such a Trifle as the Inclos'd, and a Trifle writ Extempore, long enough to make you expect a Labour'd Letter. But because in the Inclos'd I have spoken particularly of *Ben. Johnson's* Fox, I desire to say three or four words of some of his Plays more generally: The Plots of
the

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the Fox, the Silent Woman, the Alchymist, are all of them very Artful. But the Intrigues of the Fox and the Alchymist, seem to me to be more dexterously perplex'd, than to be happily Disentangled. But the Gordian Knot in the Silent Woman is untied with so much Felicity, that that alone may suffice to shew *Ben. Johnson* no ordinary Heroe. But then, perhaps, the *Silent Woman* may want the very Foundation of a good Comedy, which the other two cannot be said to want: For it seems to me, to be without a Moral. Upon which Absurdity, *Ben. Johnson* was driven by the Singularity of *Morose's* Character, which is too extravagant for Instruction, and fit, in my Opinion, only for Farce. For this seems to me, to constitute the most essential Difference, betwixt Farce and Comedy, that the Follies which are expos'd in Farce, are Singular; and those are particular, which are expos'd in Comedy. These last are those, with which some part of an Audience may be suppos'd infected, and to which all may be suppos'd obnoxious. But the first are so very odd, that by reason of their monstrous Extravagance, they cannot be thought to concern an Audience; and cannot be supposed to instruct them. For the rest of the Characters in these

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Plays,

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Plays, they are for the most part true, and most of the Humorous Characters Master-pieces. For *Ben. Johnson's* Fools, seem to shew his Wit a great deal more than his Men of Sence: I admire his Fops, and but barely esteem his Gentlemen. *Ben.* seems to draw Deformity more to the Life than Beauty: He is often so eager to pursue Folly, that he forgets to take Wit along with him. For the Dialogue, it seems to want very often that Spirit, that Grace, and that noble Railery, which are to be found in more Modern Plays, and which are Vertues that ought to be inseparable from a finish'd Comedy. But there seems to be one thing more wanting than all the rest, and that is Passion, I mean, that fine and that delicate Passion, by which the Soul shews its Politeness, ev'n in the midst of its Trouble. Now, to touch a Passion, is the surest way to Delight; for nothing agitates like it: Agitation is the Health and Joy of the Soul, of which it is so entirely fond, that even then, when we imagine we seek Repose, we only seek Agitation. You know what a famous Modern Critick has said of Comedy:

*Il faut que ses Acteurs badinent noblement,
Que son Noeud bien forme se denoue aisement;
Que*

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*Que l'action Marchant ou la Raison la Guide,
Ne se perde Jamais dans une Scène vuide,
Que son Stile humble & doux se releve a pro-
[pos,
Que ses discours par tout fertiles en bons mots,
Soient pleins de Passions finement manies,
Et les Scènes toujours l'une al'autre liee.*

I leave you to make the Application to *Johnson*—whatever I have said my self of his Comedies, I submit to your better Judgment. For you, who, after *Mr. Wycherley*, are incomparably the best Writer of it living, ought to be allowed to be the best Judge too.

I am Yours, &c.

Mr. Congreve to Mr. Dennis, ✕
Concerning Humour in COMEDY.

Dear Sir,

YOU write to me, that you have entertained your self two or three days with reading several Comedies of several Authors; and your Observation is, That there is more of Humour in our English Writers, than in any of the other Comick Poets, ancient or Modern. You desire to

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know

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know my Opinion, and at the same time my thought of that which is generally call'd Humour in Comedy.

I agree with you, in an impartial Preference of our English Writers, in that particular. But if I tell you my Thoughts of Humour, I must at the same time confess, that what I take for true Humour, has not been so often written even by them, as is generally believed: And some who have valued themselves, and have been esteem'd by others for that kind of Writing, have seldom touch'd upon it. To make this appear to the World, would require a long and labour'd Discourse, and such as I neither am able nor willing to undertake. But such little Remarks, as may be contain'd within the compass of a Letter, and such unpremeditated thoughts, as may be communicated between Friend and Friend, without incurring the Censure of the World, or setting up for a Dictator, you shall have from me, since you have enjoyn'd it.

To define Humour, perhaps, were as difficult, as to define Wit; for like that, it is of infinite Variety. To enumerate the several Humours of Men, were a Work as endless, as to sum up their several Opinions. And in my Mind, the *Quot homines tot Sententiæ*, might have been more properly interpreted

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terpreted of Humour ; since there are many Men of the same Opinion in many things, who are yet quite different in Humours. But tho' we cannot certainly tell what Wit is, or what Humour is, yet we may go near to shew something, which is not Wit, or not Humour ; and yet often mistaken for both. And since I have mentioned Wit and Humour together, let me make the first Distinction between them, and observe to you, that *Wit is often mistaken for Humour.*

I have observed, that when a few things have been wittily and pleasantly spoken by any Character in a Comedy, it has been very usual for those, who make their Remarks on a Play, while it is acting, to say, *Such a thing is very humorously spoken ; There is a great deal of Humour in that Part.* Thus the Character of the Person speaking, may be, surprisngly and pleasantly, is mistaken for a Character of Humour ; which indeed is a Character of Wit : But there is a great difference between a Comedy, wherein there are many things humorously, as they call it, which is pleasantly spoken ; and one, where there are several Characters of Humour, distinguish'd by the particular and different Humours, appropriated to the several Persons represented, and which naturally arise from the different Constitu-

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tions,

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tions, Complexions, and Dispositions of Men. The saying of Humorous Things, does not distinguish Characters; for every Person in a Comedy, may be allow'd to speak them. From a witty Man they are expected; and even a Fool may be permitted to stumble on 'em by chance. Tho' I make a difference betwixt Wit and Humour; yet I do not think that Humorous Characters exclude Wit: No, but the manner of Wit should be adapted to the Humour. As for Instance, A Character of a Splenetick and Peevish Humour, should have a Satyrical Wit; a Jolly and Sanguine Humour, should have a Facetious Wit: The former should speak positively; the latter carelessly: For the former observes, and shews things as they are; the latter rather overlooks Nature, and speaks things as he would have them; and his Wit and Humour have both of them a less Alloy of Judgment than the others.

As Wit, so, its opposite, *Folly*, is sometimes mistaken for Humour.

When a Poet brings a Character on the Stage, committing a thousand Absurdities, and talking Impertinencies, Roaring aloud, and Laughing immoderately, on every, or rather upon no occasion; this is a Character of Humour.

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Is any thing more common, than to have a pretended Comedy, stuff'd with such Grotesque Figures, and Farce-Fools? Things, that either are not in Nature, or if they are, are Monsters, and Births of Mischance; and consequently as such, should be stifled, and huddled out of the way, like *Sooterkins*, that Mankind may not be shock'd with an appearing Possibility of the Degeneration of a God-like Species. For my part, I am as willing to Laugh, as any Body, and as easily diverted with an Object truly ridiculous: But at the same time, I can never care for seeing things, that force me to entertain low Thoughts of my Nature. I don't know how it is with others, but I confess freely to you, I could never look long upon a Monkey, without very mortifying Reflections; Tho' I never heard any thing to the contrary, why that Creature is not Originally of a distinct Species. As I don't think Humour exclusive of Wit, neither do I think it inconsistent with Folly; but I think the Follies should be only such, as Mens Humours may incline 'em to; and not Follies intirely abstracted from both Humour and Nature.

Sometimes personal Defects are misrepresented for Humours.

I mean, sometimes Characters are barbarously

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barously exposed on the Stage, ridiculing natural Deformities, casual Defects in the Senses, and Infirmities of Age. Sure the Poet must both be very Ill-natur'd himself, and think his Audience so, when he proposes by shewing a Man deform'd, or deaf, or blind, to give them an agreeable Entertainment; and hopes to raise their Mirth, by what is truly an Object of Compassion. But much need not be said upon this Head to any body, especially to you, who in one of your Letters to me concerning Mr. *Johnson's* Fox, have justly excepted against this Immoral Part of Ridicule in *Corbaccio's* Character; and there I must agree with you to blame him, whom otherwise I cannot enough admire, for his great Mastery of true Humour in Comedy.

External Habit of Body, is often mistaken for Humour.

By External Habit, I do not mean the ridiculous dress or Cloathing of a Character, tho' that goes a good way in some received Characters; (but undoubtedly a Man's Humour may incline him to dress differently from other People) but I mean a Singularity of Manners, speech, and Behaviour, peculiar to all, or most of the same Country, Trade, Profession or Education. I cannot think that a Humour, which is
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only a Habit, or Disposition contracted by Use or Custom; for by a Disuse, or Compliance with other Customs, it may be worn off, or diversifi'd.

Affectation is generally mistaken for Humour.

These are indeed so much alike, that, at a distance, they may be mistaken one for the other: For what is Humour in one, may be Affectation in another; and nothing is more common than for some to affect particular ways of saying and doing things, peculiar to others, whom they admire, and would imitate. Humour is the Life, Affectation the Picture. He that draws a Character of Affectation, shews Humour at the Second-hand; he at best but publishes a Translation, and his Pictures are but Copies.

But as these two last Distinctions are the nicest, so it may be most proper to explain them, by particular Instances from some Author of Reputation. Humour I take either to be born with us, and so of a natural Growth; or else to be grafted into us by some accidental Change in the Constitution, or Revolution of the internal Habit of Body; by which it becomes, if I may so call it, Naturaliz'd.

Humour is from Nature, Habit from Custom, and Affectation from Industry.

•Hu.

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Humour shews us as we are.

Habit shews us, as we appear, under a forcible Impression.

Affectation shews what we would be, under a voluntary Disguise.

Tho' here I would observe by the way, that a continued Affectation, may in time become a Habit.

The Character of *Morose* in the Silent Woman, I take to be a Character of Humour. And I choose to Instance this Character to you, from many others of the same Author, because I know it has been condemn'd by many as Unnatural and Farce. And you have your self hinted some Dislike of it, for the same reason, in a Letter to me, concerning some of *Johnson's* Plays.

Let us suppose *Morose* to be a Man naturally Splenetick and Melancholy ; is there any thing more offensive to one of such a Disposition, than Noise and Clamour : Let any Man that has the Spleen (and there are enough in *England*) be Judge. We see common Examples of this Humour in Little every Day. 'Tis ten to one, but three parts in four of the Company that you dine with, are discompos'd and startled at the Cutting of a Cork, or Scratching a Plate with a Knife : It is a Proportion of the same Humour, that makes such or any other

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other Noise offensive to the Person that hears it; for there are others who will not be disturb'd at all by it. Well; but *Morose*, you will say, is so extravagant, he cannot bear any Discourse or Conversation, above a Whisper. Why, it is his Excess of this Humour, that makes him become ridiculous, and qualifies his Character for Comedy. If the Poet had given him but a moderate proportion of that Humour, 'tis odds but half the Audience, would have sided with the character, and have condemn'd the Author, for exposing a Humour which was neither remarkable nor ridiculous. Besides, the Distance of the Stage requires the Figure represented, to be something larger than the Life; and sure a Picture may have Features larger in proportion, and yet be very like the Original. If this Exactness of Quantity, were to be observed in Wit, as some would have it in Humour; what would become of those Characters that are design'd for Men of Wit? I believe if a Poet should steal a Dialogue of any length, from the extempore Discourse of the two Wittiest Men upon Earth he would find the Scene but coldly receiv'd by the Town. But to the purpose:

The Character of Sir *John Daw* in the same Play, is a Character of Affectation:
He

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He every where discovers an Affectation of Learning; when he is not only conscious to himself, but the Audience also plainly perceives that he is Ignorant. Of this kind are the Characters of *Thraso* in the *Eunuch* of *Terence*, and *Pyrgopolinices* in the *Miles Gloriosus* of *Plautus*: They affect to be thought Valiant, when both themselves and the Audience know they are not. Now, such a boasting of Valour in Men who were really Valiant, would undoubtedly be a Humour; for a fiery Disposition might naturally throw a Man into the same Extravagance, which is only affected in the Characters I have mentioned.

The Character of *Cob* in *Every Man in his Humour*, and most of the under Characters in *Bartholomew-Fair*, discover'd only a Singularity of Manners, appropriated to the several Educations and Professions of the Persons represented. They are not Humours, but Habits contracted by Custom. Under this Head may be ranged all Country Clowns, Sailors, Tradesmen, Jockeys, Gamesters, and such-like, who make use of Cants or peculiar Dialects in their several Arts and Vocations. One may almost give a Receipt for the Composition of such a Character: For the Poet has nothing to do, but to collect a few proper Phrases and

Terms

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Terms of Art, and to make the Person apply them by ridiculous Metaphors in his Conversation, with Characters of different Natures. Some late Characters of this kind have been very successful ; but in my mind they may be painted without much Art or Labour ; since they require little more, than a good Memory and superficial Observation. But true Humour cannot be shown without a Dissection of Nature, and a narrow Search to discover the first Seeds from whence it has its Root and Growth.

If I were to write to the World, I should be obliged to dwell longer upon each of these Distinctions and Examples ; for I know that they would not be plain enough to all Readers : But a bare Hint is sufficient to inform you of the Notions which I have on this Subject : and I hope by this time you are of my Opinion, that Humour is neither Wit, nor Folly, nor personal Defect, nor Affectation, nor Habit ; and yet, that each, and all of these, have been both written and received for Humour.

I should be unwilling to venture even on a bare Description of Humour, much more to make a Definition of it ; but now my hand is in, I'll tell you what serves me instead of either : I take it to be, *A singular and unavoidable manner of doing, or saying*
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any thing, peculiar and natural to one Man only ; by which his Speech and Actions are distinguish'd from those of other Men.

Our Humour has relation to us, and to what proceeds from us, as the Accidents have to a Substance ; it is a Colour, Taste, and Smell, diffused thro' all ; tho' our Actions are never so many, and different in Form, they are all Splinters of the same Wood, and have naturally one Complexion ; which tho' it may be disguised by Art, yet cannot be wholly changed : We may paint it with other Colours, but we cannot change the Grain. So the natural Sound of an Instrument will be distinguish'd, tho' the Notes expressed by it, are never so various, and the Diversions never so many. Dissimulation, may by degrees, become more easie to our Practice ; but it can never absolutely transubstantiate us into what we would seem : It will always be in some proportion a Violence upon Nature.

A Man may change his Opinion, but I believe he will find it a Difficulty to part with his Humour : and there is nothing more provoking, than the being made sensible of that Difficulty. Sometimes, one shall meet with those, who perhaps, innocently enough, but at the same time impertiently, will ask the Question, *Why are you not mer-*

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ry? *Why are you not gay, pleasant, and cheerful?* Then instead of answering, could I ask such one, *Why are you not Handsome? Why have you not black Eyes, and a better Complexion?* Nature abhors to be forc'd.

The two famous Philosophers of *Ephesus* and *Abdera*, have their different Sects at this Day: Some weep, and others laugh at one and the same thing.

I don't doubt, but you have observed several Men laugh when they are angry; others who are silent; some that are loud: Yet I cannot suppose that it is the Passion of Anger which is in it self different, or more or less in one than t'other; but that it is the Humour of the Man that is predominant, and urges him to express it in that manner. Demonstrations of Pleasure are as various; one Man has a Humour of retiring from all Company, when any thing has happen'd to please him beyond Expectation; he hugs himself alone, and thinks it an addition to the Pleasure to keep it secret. Another is upon Thorns till he has made Proclamation of it; and must make other People sensible of his Happiness, before he can be so himself. So it is in Grief, and other Passions. Demonstrations of Love, and the Effects of that Passion upon several Humours, are infinitely different: But here

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the Ladies, who abound in Servants, are the best Judges. Talking of the Ladies, methinks something should be observed of the Humour of the Fair Sex, since they are sometimes so kind as to furnish out a Character for Comedy. But I must confess, I have never made any Observation of what I apprehend to be true Humour in Women. Perhaps Passions are too powerful in that Sex, to let Humour have its course; or may be by reason of their natural Coldness, Humour cannot exert itself to that extravagant degree, which it often does in the Male-sex: For if ever any thing does appear comical or ridiculous in a Woman, I think it is little more than an acquir'd Folly, or an Affectation. We may call them the weaker Sex, but I think the true reason is, because our Follies are stronger, and our Faults are more prevailing.

One might think that the diversity of Humour, which must be allowed to be diffused throughout Mankind, might afford endless Matter, for the support of Comedies. But when we come closely to consider that Point, and nicely to distinguish the difference of Humours, I believe we shall find the contrary. For tho' we allow every Man something of his own, and a peculiar Humour; yet every Man has it not in quan-

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quantity, to become remarkable by it: or, if many do become remarkable by their Humours; yet all those Humours may not be diverting. Nor is it only requisite to distinguish what Humour will be diverting, but also how much of it, what part of it to shew in Light, and what to cast in Shades; how to set it off by preparatory Scenes, and by opposing other Humours to it in the same Scene. Through a wrong Judgment, sometimes, Mens Humours may be oppos'd when there is really no specific Difference between them; only a greater proportion of the same, in one than t'other; occasion'd by having more Flegm, or Choler, or whatever the Constitution is, from whence their Humours derive their Source.

There is infinitely more to be said on this Subject; tho' perhaps I have already said too much; but I have said it to a Friend, who I am sure, will not expose it, if he does not approve of it. I believe the Subject is intirely new, and was never touch'd upon before; and if I would have any one to see this private Essay, it should be some one, who might be provoked by my Errors in it, to publish a more judicious Treatise on the Subject. Indeed I wish it were done, that the World being a little acquainted with the

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Scarcity of true Humour, and the difficulty of finding and shewing it, might look a little more favourably on the Labours of them, who endeavour to search into Nature for it, and lay it open to the Publick View.

I don't say, but that very entertaining and useful Characters, and proper for Comedy, may be drawn from Affectations, and those other Qualities which I have endeavoured to distinguish from Humour: but I would not have such imposed on the World for Humour, nor esteem'd of equal value with it. It were perhaps, the Work of a long Life to make one Comedy true in all its Parts, and to give every Character in it a true and distinct Humour. Therefore every Poet must be beholding to other Helps, to make out his Number of ridiculous Characters. But I think such a One deserves to be broke, who makes all false Musters; who does not shew one true Humour in a Comedy, but entertains his Audience to the end of the Play with every thing out of Nature.

I will make but one Observation to you more, and have done; and that is grounded upon an Observation of your own, and which I mention'd at the beginning of my Letter, *viz.* That there is more of Humour in our English Comick Writers, than in any others.

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others. I do not at all wonder at it, for I look upon Humour to be almost of English Growth; at least it does not seem to have found such Encrease on any other Soil: And what appears to me to be the reason of it, is the great Freedom, Privilege, and Liberty which the common People of *England* enjoy. Any Man that has a Humour, is under no Restraint, or fear of giving it Vent; they have a Proverb among them, which, may be, will shew the Bent and Genius of the People, as well as a longer Discourse: *He that will have a May-pole, shall have a May-pole.* This is a Maxim with them, and their Practice is agreeable to it. I believe something considerable too may be ascribed to their feeding so much on Flesh, and the Grossness of their Diet in general. But I have done, let the Physicians agree that. Thus you have my Thoughts of Humour, to my Power of Expressing them in so little Time and Compass. You will be kind to shew me wherein I have err'd; and as you are very capable of giving me Instruction, so I think I have a very just Title to demand it from you; being, without Reserve,

Your real Friend and humble Servant,

W. CONGRIEVE

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To Mr. Congreve, at Tunbridge.

Dear Sir,

MR. *Moyle* and I have impatiently expected to hear from you. But if the Well which you drink of, had sprung up from *Lethe*, you could not have been more forgetful of us. Indeed, as the *Tunbridge-Water* is good for the Spleen, it may be said in some manner to cause Oblivion. But I will yet a while hope that Mr. *Moyle* and I are not of the number of Things that plague you: However, I am so sensible of your being mindful of me in Town, that I should be ungrateful, if I should complain that you do not remember me where you are. Mr. *Moyle* tells me that you have made a favourable mention of me, to a certain Lady of your Acquaintance, whom he calls—— But then to mortifie the Old Man in me, or indeed rather the Young, he assur'd me, that you had given a much better Character of him. However, for that which you gave of me, I cannot but own my self obliged to you, and I look upon your Kindness as so much the greater, because I am sensible, that I do not deserve it. And I could almost wish that your good Qualities were not quite so numerous, that

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I might be able to make you some Return in Specie: For Commending you now, I do you but Justice, which a Man of Honour will do to his Enemy; whereas you, by partial Praise, have treated me like a Friend. I make no doubt, but that you do me the Justice to believe that I am perfectly yours; and that your Merit has engag'd me, and your Favours oblig'd me to be all my Life-time,

Dear Sir, Your humble Servant,

J. DENNIS.

Mr. Congreve to Mr. Dennis.

Dear Sir,

IT is not more to keep my Word, than to gratifie my Inclination, that I write to you; and tho' I have thus long deferr'd it, I was never forgetful of you, nor of my Promise. Indeed I waited in Expectation of something that might enable me to return the entertainment I received from your Letters: but you represent the Town so agreeable to me, that you quite put me out of Conceit with the Country; and my Designs of making Observations from it.

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Be-

88 *Letters on several Occasions.*

Before I came to *Tunbridge*, I proposed to my self the Satisfaction of Communicating the Pleasures of the place to you: But if I keep my Resolution, I must transcribe, and return you your own Letters; since I must own I have met with nothing else so truly Delightful. When you suppose the Country agreeable to me, you suppose such Reasons why it should be so, that while I read your Letter, I am of your Mind; but when I look off, I find I am only charm'd with the Landskip which you have drawn. So that if I would see a fine Prospect of the Country, I must desire you to send it me from the Town; as if I would eat good Fruit here, perhaps the best way were, to beg a Basket from my friends in *Covent-garden*. After all this, I must tell you there is a great deal of Company at *Tunbridge*; and some very agreeable: but the greater part, is of that sort, who at home converse only with their own Relations; and consequently when they come abroad, have few Acquaintance, but such as they bring with them. But were the Company better, or worse, I Would have you expect no Characters from me; for I profess my self an Enemy to Detraction; And who is there, that can justly merit Commendation? I have a mind to write to you, without the Pre-
tence

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tence of any manner of News, as I might drink to you without naming a Health ; for I intend only my Service to you. I wish for you very often, that I might recommend you to some new Acquaintance that I have made here, and think very well worth the keeping ; I mean Idleness and a good Stomach. You would not think how People eat here ; every Body has the Appitite of an Ostrich, and as they drink Steel in the Morning, so I believe at Noon they could digest Iron. But sure you will laugh at me for calling Idleness a new Acquaintance ; when, to your Knowledge, the greatest part of my Business, is little better. Ay, but here's the Comfort of the Change ; I am Idle now, without taking Pains to be so, or to make other People so ; for Poetry is neither in my Head, nor in my Heart. I know not whether these Waters may have any Communication with *Lethe*, but sure I am, they have none with the Streams of *Helicon*. I have often wonder'd how those wicked Writers of Lampoons, could crowd together such quantities of execrable Verses, tag'd with bad Rhimes, as I have formerly seen sent from this Place. But I am half of Opinion now, that this Well is an *Anti-Hippocrene* : What if we should get a quantity of the Water privately convey'd into the
the

90 *Letters on several Occasions.*

the Cistern at *Will's* Coffee-house, for an Experiment? But I am Extravagant— Tho' I remember *Ben Johnson* in his Comedy of *Cynthia's* Revels, makes a Well, which he there calls the Fountain of Self-Love, to be the source of many entertaining and ridiculous Humours I am of Opinion, that something very Comical and New, might be brought upon the Stage, from a Fiction of the like Nature. But now I talk of the Stage, pray if any thing New should appear there, let me have an account of it; for tho Plays are a kind of Winter-fruit, yet I know there are now and then some Wind-falls at this time of the Year, which must be presently served up, lest they should not keep till the proper Season of Entertainment. 'Tis now the time, when the Sun breeds Insects; and you must expect to have the Hum and Buz about your Ears, of Summer-flies, small Poets. Cuckows have this time allow'd 'em to Sing, tho' they are damn'd to Silence all the rest of the Year. Besides, the approaching Feast of *St. Bartholomew* both creates an Expectation, and bespeaks an Allowance of unnatural Productions and monstrous Births: Methinks the days of *Bartholomew-fair* are like so many Sabbaths, or days of Privilege, wherein Criminals and Malefactors
in

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in Poetry, are permitted to creep abroad. They put me in mind (tho' at a different time of Year) of the Roman *Saturnalia*, when all the Scum, and Rabble, and Slaves of *Rome*, by a kind of Annual and limited Manumission, were suffer'd to make abominable Mirth, and Profane the days of *Jubilee*, with vile Buffoonery, by Authority. But I forget that I am writing a Post-letter, and run into Length like a Poet in a Dedication, when he forgets his Patron to talk of himself. But I will take care to make no Apology for it, lest my Excuse (as Excuses generally go) should add to the Fault. Besides, I would have no appearance of Formality, when I am to tell you, that

I am your real Friend,

and Humble Servant,

W. CONGREVE.

Letters

Letters of LOVE.

Written by ———

Dear Madam,

NOT believe that I Love you: You cannot pretend to be so incredulous. If you do not believe my Tongue, consult my Eyes, consult your own. You will find by yours, that they have Charms; by mine, that I have a Heart which feels them. Recal to mind what happen'd last Night: That at least was a Lover's Kiss. Its Eagerness, its Fierceness, its Warmth, express'd the God its Parent. But oh! its Sweetness, and its melting Softness express'd him more. With Trembling in my Limbs, and Fevers in my Soul I ravish'd it: Convulsions, Pantings, Murmurs shew'd the mighty Disorder within me: The mighty Disorder encreased by it. For those dear Lips shot through my Heart, and thro' my bleeding Vitals, delicious Poison, and an avoidless, but yet a charming Ruine.

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Ruine. What cannot a Day produce? The Night before, I thought my self a Happy Man. In want of nothing, and in fairest Expectation of fortune: Approv'd of by Men of wit, and applauded by others? Pleased, nay charm'd with my friends, my then dearest Friends; Sensible of ev'ry delicate Pleasure, and in their turns possessing all. But Love, Almighty Love! seems in a Moment to have remov'd me to a prodigious Distance from every Object but you alone: In the midst of Crowds I remain in Solitude. Nothing but you can lay hold of my Mind, and that can lay hold of nothing but you. I appear transported to some Foreign Desart with you, (Oh that I were really thus transported!) where, abundantly supplied with every thing in thee, I might live out an Age of uninterrupted Extasie. The Scene of the World's great Stage, seems suddenly and sadly chang'd. Unlovely Objects are all around me, excepting thee: The Charms of all the World appear to be translated to thee. Thus in this sad, but oh, too pleasing State! my Soul can fix upon nothing but thee: Thee it Contemplates, Admires, Adores, nay, Depends on; Trusts in you alone. If you and Hope forsake it, Despair and endless Misery attend it.

Dear

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Dear Madam,

THis I send by the Permission of a severe Father, I will not say a cruel one, since he is yours. What is it that he has taken so mortally ill of me? That I die for his Daughter, is my only Offence. And yet he has refused to let me take ev'n my Farewell of you. Thrice happy be the Omen! may I never take my Farewel of thee, till my Soul takes leave of my Body. At least, he cannot restrain me from Loving: No, I will love thee in spite of all Opposition. Tho' your Friends and mine prove equally averse, yet I will love thee with a Constancy that shall appear to all the World, to have something so noble in it, that all the World shall confess, that it deserv'd not to be Unfortunate. I will forsake even my Friends for thee: My honest, my witty, my brave Friends; who had always been till I had seen thee, the dearest part of Mankind to me. Thou shalt supply the place of them all with me. Thou shalt be my bosom, my best-lov'd Friend; and at the same time, my only Mistress, and my dearest Wife. Have the Goodness to pardon this Familiarity. 'Tis the tenderest leave of the faithfulest Lover; and here to shew an Over-respectfulness,
would

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would be to wrong my Passion. That I love thee more than Life, nay, even than Glory, which I courted once with a burning Desire, bear Witness all my unquiet Days, and every restless Night, and that terrible Agitation of Mind and Body, which proceeded from my fear of losing thee. To lose thee is to lose all Happiness; Tormenting Reflection to a sensible Soul! How often has my Reason been going upon it? But the sons of Reason would be but too happy upon the loss of thee: Since all the Advantage that I could draw from its Presence, would be to know my self Miserable. But the time calls upon me: I am oblig'd to take an odious Journey, and leave thee behind with my Enemies. But thine shall never do thee harm with me. Adieu, thou dearest, thou loveliest of Creatures! No Change of Time or Place, or the Remonstrances of the best of Friends, shall ever be able to altar my Passion for thee. Be but one quarter so kind, so just to me, and the Sun will not shine on a happier Man than my self.

Dear

96 *Letters on several Occasions.*

Dear Madam,

M Ay I presume to beg Pardon for the Fault I committed? So foolish a Fault, that it was below not only a man of Sence, but a Man; and of which nothing could ever have made me Guilty, but the Fury of a Passion with which none but your lovely self could inspire me. May I presume to beg pardon for a Fault which I can never forgive my self? To purchase that Pardon, what would I not endure? You shall see me prostrate before you, and use me like a Slave, while I kiss the dear Feet that trample upon me. But if my Crime be too great for Forgiveness, as indeed it is very great, deny me not one dear parting Look; Let me see you once before I must never see you more. Christ! I want Patience to support that accursed Thought, I have nothing in the World that is dear to me, but you. You have made every thing else indifferent: And can I resolve never to see you more? In spite of my self I must always see you. Your Form is fix'd by Fate in my Mind, and is never to be remov'd. I see those lovely piercing Eyes continually, I see each Moment those ravishing Lips, which I have gaz'd on still with Desire, and still have touch'd with Transport; and at which

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which I have so often flown with all the Fury of the most violent Love. Jesus! From whence, and whither am I fallen? From the Hopes of blissful Extasies to black Despair! From the Expectation of immortal Transports, which none but your dear Self can give me, and which none but he who loves like me, could ever so much as think of, to a Complication of cruel Passions, and the most dreadful Condition of Human Life. My Fault indeed, has been very great, and cries aloud for the severest Vengeance. See it inflicted on me: See me despair and die for that Fault. But let me not die Unpardon'd, Madam; I die for you, but die in the most cruel and dreadful manner. The Wretch that lies broken on the Wheel alive, feels not a quarter of what I endure. Yet boundless Love has been all my Crime; unjust, ungrateful, barbarous Return of it! Suffer me to take my eternal Leave of you; when I have done that, how easie will it be to bid all the rest of the World Adieu.

Dear Madam,

THIS is the third Letter that I have sent you since I came hither: Those which went before it were all the Over-

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flowings

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flowings of a Heart more full of Passion than ever was Man's before. It is impossible for me to be distant from you, but I must send to you by every occasion. And yet you can resolve to take no Notice of all my Tenderness: Yes, my dearest, inhumane Creature you can. You have been sick, nay dangerously sick, and have never sent to me. Have I left all the World for you, and could you resolve to leave the World without me; Nay, without so much as giving me the least Notice of it? Christ! Could you resolve to leave me to Despair and to endless Misery, without expressing the least Concern for me! And can I persist in loving one so ungrateful! Is there such another ungrateful Creature alive! No, there lives not so ungrateful a Creature, but there lives not one so Charming.

Dear Madam,

CAN you be angry still with your poor Penitent? You cannot have the ill Nature, sure? Yes, but you can, you say, since he could have the Presumption to be angry with you. But, my Dearest, there is this Difference betwixt your Anger and mine; Mine was caus'd by the Cruelty of
your

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your suppos'd Infidelity; and yours by the Kindness of your Lover's Resentment: for if I had not been fond of thee to the last degree, I had not been so incens'd against you. Yet even when I was most so, I could sooner have pluck'd out an Eye, than have resolved to have parted with thee: Nay, I could sooner have torn out both Eyes, if the loss of both would not have for ever depriv'd me of the dear, the ravishing sight of thee. But if you still think that my Anger had Guilt in it, and that I ought to suffer for it, the means to punish me with utmost Severity, and to make me my own Tormenter, is to tell me, you love me: then I shall curse my self and my Rage, and feel all the Plague of Remorse for having offended thee: I shall look upon my self as the basest, the most ungrateful of Men for abusing thy Goodness, and thy charming Tenderneſs. I shall believe that I can never humble my self enough, and never suffer enough to deserve Forgiveness: Thus, Madam, you have your Revenge in your Power. It is a false Modesty which restrains you from taking it: In order to it, you have nothing to do, but to prove your self tender, and to shew your self grateful. If you must be aſham'd, blush at your Cruelty; blush at your Inhumanity:

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But

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But Gratitude is Reason, and Love is Nature; never be asham'd of those. Do but consider, there was a time, when I was happy in your Esteem; yes, there has been a time, in which I was thought not altogether void of Reason by you: How then can you blush at the owning a Passion, which you command with an absolute Sway, at the very time that it Tyrannizes over me?

Dear Madam,

MY Friend's Stratagem gave me an opportunity of seeing you, by finding Fault with you. It must proceed from Design or Madness if I find fault with thee: Thy lovely Face is the very same that set all my Blood in a flame; and I am sure my Heart can never be alter'd. How it trembled in my Breast when I saw you last, and by its trouble confess'd its Conqueror! How it has burnt ever since with redoubled Fury! When I shall be free from this Flame, Heav'n only knows, for the Hour of my Death Heaven only knows; 'Tis a Flame that has incorporated with that of my Life, and both will go out together. In vain I invoke my Reason to resist my Senses: My Reason finds you more lovely than my Eyes did

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did before; shews me all the Graces of thy beauteous Mind, and grows pleas'd and prides it self in its own Captivity. You accuse me, they say, of some extraordinary Crime: A Crime against whom? Against you whom I love! Against you, for whom I could die! Strange Accusation! Yet at the same time you refuse to see me, you refuse to receive my Letters: And must I be condemn'd Unheard? Robbers are allow'd to speak before they are sentenc'd; Murderers have the Privilege to plead for their Lives; And shall the tenderest Love be denied the Privilege which is granted to the blackest Malice? I have been guilty of nothing but too much Love, if too much Love be a Fault. Why have you given Credit to my Enemies, before you have heard me? I may indeed be convinc'd of an Error, but I can never be convicted of a Crime against you. The Man must be mad, nay, desperately mad, who can design to injure himself; and thou art, by much, the better, the dearer Part of me. Give me leave to see you once more before I depart: Let me see once more that Face which has undone me, yet charms me even in Ruine:

*O Face industriously contriv'd by Heaven,
To fix my Eyes and captivate my Soul!*

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Nay,

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Nay, I will see you, if it be but to upbraid you with your barbarous Wish: If at the time that you made it, you had struck a Dagger in my Heart, you had given it a gentler Wound.

The only Wish that I have to make, is to be happy in thee; if that succeeds not, I have another, and that is, to lie at rest in my Grave.

The End of the Love-Letters.

To Walter Moyle, Esq; at Bake, in Cornwall.

Dear Sir,

YOUR long Silence made me conjecture, that you are so intent upon being Burgeſs of *Bodmyn*, that you had forgot the Citizens of *Covent-garden*: At last I received an agreeable Letter from you. You had best have a care of talking in *Cornwal*, at the rate that you write to your Friends. If you do, the Cornish Men may not think you rightly Qualified to Represent them. When you left the Town, you talk'd of a Critical Correspondence between us: But Idleness on your side, and ill Humour on mine,

mine, have baulked a very hopeful Design. But an Accident has lately happened, which obliges me to provoke you: For there has just been a Play acted, called, *The Mock-marriage*, the Author of which, whose Name I have forgot, asserts, dogmatically, in his Preface, That he who writes by Rule shall only have his Labour for his Pains. I know not what this Author can mean by this: For, whom does he pretend to perswade by this fine Assertion? Not Mr. *Moyle*, and me at least. We know indeed very well, that a Man may write regularly, and yet fail of Pleasing; and that a Poet may please in a Play that is not regular. But this is eternally true, That he who writes regularly *cæteris Paribus*, must always please more, than he who transgresses the Rules. Nothing can please in a Play but Nature; no, not in a Play which is written against the Rules: and the more there is of Nature in any Play, the more that Play must Delight. Now the Rules are nothing but an Observation of Nature: For Nature is Rule and Order it self. There is not one of the Rules, but what might be us'd to evince this. But I shall be contented with shewing some Instances of it, even in the Mechanical Rules of the Unities: And first for that of place; It is certain that it is in Nature im-

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possible, for a Man who is in the Square in *Covent-garden*, to see the things, that at the same time, are transacted at *Westminster*. And then for that of Time, a reasonable Man may delude himself so far, as to fancy that he sits for the space of twelve Hours, without removing, eating or sleeping; but he must be a Devil that can fancy he does it for a Week. What I have said may evince a Necessity of observing the Unities of Time and of Place, if a Poet would thoroughly write up to Nature. And then the Unity of Action follows on course: For, that two Actions that are entire, and independent, should happen in the same short space of time, in the same little compass of place, begin together, go on together, and end together, without obstructing or confounding one another; this indeed may be done upon the Stage, but in Nature it is highly improbable. Well then, since the Rules are nothing but Nature it self, and nothing but Nature can please, and since the more that any Play has of Nature, the more that Play must Delight, it follows that a Play which is regularly written, *cæteris Paribus*, must please more than a Play which is written against the Rules, which is a Demonstration. Rule may be said to be a Play; what Symmetry of

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of Parts is known to be to a Face? The Features may be regular, and yet a great or a delicate Air may be wanting: And there may be a commanding or engaging Air, in a Face whose Features are not regular. But this all the World must allow of, that there can never be seen any Sovereign Beauty, where Air and Regularity of Features are not united. Thus is Reason against this Author; but the mischief is, that Experience is against him too: For all your Dramatick Poets must confess, that the Plays which they have writ with most Regularity, have been they which have pleased most. I must trouble you with another Dramatical Criticism, but not till the next Opportunity.

I am yours, &c.

Mr. ——— to Mr. Congreve.

Dear Sir,

I Came home from the Land's End Yesterday, where I found three Letters from Mr. *Dennis*, and one from you, with a humorous Description of *John Abassus*, A Country Poet. since the dubbing of *Don Quixote*, and the Coronation of *Petrarch* in the Capitol,

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tol, there has not been so great a Solemnity as the Consecration of *John Abassus*. In all the Pagan Ritual, I never met with the Form of Poetical Orders; but I believe the Ceremony of Consecrating a Man to *Apollo*, is the same with Devoting a Man to the *Dii Manes*, for both are Martyrs to Fame. I believe not a Man of the Grave Club durst assist at this ridiculous Scene, for fear of laughing out-right. *W.* was in his Kingdom, and for my part I would have rather sat there than in the House of Commons. Would to God I could laugh with you for one Hour or two at all the ridiculous things that have happen'd at *Will's* Coffee-house since I left it, 'tis the merriest Place in the World: Like *Africa*, every Day it produces a Monster; and they are got there just as *Pliny* says they are in *Africa*, Beasts of different kinds come to drink, mingle with one another and beget Monsters. Present my humble Duty to my new Lord, and till him, that I am preparing an Address to Congratulate his Accession to the Throne of the Rabble. Tell the Lady, who was the Author of the *Hue and Cry* after me, she might have sent out a hundred *Hues and Crys* before she would have found a Poet. I took an effectual Course not to be apprehended for a Poet, for I went down clad like a Soldier, with

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with a new Suit of Cloaths on, and, I think there could not have been a better Disguise for a Poet, unless I had stol'n Dr. B——'s Coat. Mr. Dennis sent me down P—— M——'s *Parodie*. I can say very little of the Poem; but as for the Dialogue, I think 'twas the first time that M—— suffered any body to talk with him: though indeed here he interrupts Mr. Boileau in the midst of the first word. My humble Service to Mr. Wycherley. I desire you would write me some News of the Stage, and what Progress you have made in your Tragedy.

*I am your affectionate Friend
and Servant.*

Mr. Congreve to Mr.——

Dear Sir,

I Can't but think that a Letter from me in London, to you in C——, is like some ancient Correspondence between an Inhabitant of Rome and a Cimmerian: May be my way of Writing may not be so modestly compared with Roman Epistles; but the Resemblance of the Place will justify the other part of the Parallel: The subterraneous

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aneous Habitations of the Miners, and the Proximity of the *Bajæ* help a little; and while you are at *B---* let *B---* be *Cumæ*, and do you supply the Place of *Sibylla*. You may look on this as Railery, but I can assure you, nothing less than Oracles are expected from you, in the next Parliament, if you succeed in your Election, as we are pretty well assured you will. You wish your self with us at *Will's* Coffee-house; all here wish for you, from the President of the Grave Club, to the most puny Member of the Rabble; they who can think, think of you, and the rest talk of you. There is no such Monster in this *Africa*: that is not sensible of your Absence; even the worst natured People, and those of least Wit lament it; I mean, half Criticks and Quiblers. To tell you all that want you, I should name all the Creatures of *Covent-garden*, which like those of *Eden-garden* would want some *Adam* to be a Godfather and give them Names. I can't tell whether I may justly compare our *Covent-garden*, to that of *Eden*, or no; for tho' I believe we may have Variety of strange Animals equal to Paradise, yet I fear we have not amongst us the Tree of Knowledge. It had been much to the Disadvantage of *Pliny*, had the Coffee-house been in his

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his Days; for sure he would have described some who frequent it; which would have given him the Reputation of a more fabulous Writer than he has now. But being in our Age it does him a Service, for we who know it, can give Faith to all his Monsters. You who took care to go down into the Country unlike a Poet, I hope will take care not to come up again like a Politician; for then, you will add a new Monster to the Coffee-house, that was never seen therebefore. So you may come back again, in your Soldier's Coat, for in that you will no more be suspected for a Politician, than a Poet. Pray come upon any Terms, for you are wished for by every body, but most wanted by your

Affectionate Friend and Servant,

W. CONGREVE.

To Mr. Congreve, at Tunbridge.

Dear Sir,

MY Business and my Thanks for your Kindness, you will find in the Inclos'd, which I had sent by the last Post, had not an accident hinder'd it. All the
Re-

110 *Letters on several Occasions.*

Return that I can make you at present is, to acquaint you with such News as we have. Our Friend Mr—— went last *Friday* to the Bath: He promis'd to write to me from that place; but it would be unreasonable indeed to expect it. For *W*—— takes up his Afternoons, and his mornings I suppose, are spent in Contemplation at the Cross Bath. Most of your Friends of the Coffee-house are dispers'd: Some are retreated into the Country in hopes of some Favours, which they expect from the Muses; two or three of them are retir'd in Town to ruminate on some Favours, which they have receiv'd from their Mistresses.

So that the Coffee-house is like to grow into Reputation again. For if any one gives it the scandalous Denomination of the Wits Coffee-house, he must call it so by Antiphrasis, because there comes no Wit there. Here are two or three indeed, who set up for Wits at home, and endeavour to pass for Wise at the Coffee-house: for they hold their Tongues there. Indeed the Coffee-house is generally the Exchange for Wit, where the Merchants meet without bringing the Commodity with them, which they leave at home in their Warehouses, *alias*, their Closets, while they go abroad to take a prudent care for the vend-
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ing it. But you are of the Number of those happy Few, who so abound in Hereditary Possessions, and in rich Returns from *Greece* and from *Italy*, that you always carry some of it about you to be liberal to your Friends of that which you sell to Strangers. Mr. — bables eternally according to his old rate, and as extravagantly as if he talk'd to himself; which he certainly does, if no body minds him any more than I do: He has been just now enquiring, what sort of Distemper the Spleen is; an infallible sign that he is the only Man in *Covent-garden*, who does not know he is an Ass. To make him sensible what the Spleen is, I could find in my Heart to shew him himself, and give it him. If any thing restrains me from being reveng'd of his Impertinence this way, 'tis the Consideration that it will make him wiser: This Coxcomb naturally puts me in mind of the Stage, where they have lately acted some new Plays; but had there been more of them, I would not scruple to affirm, that the Stage is at present a Desert and a barren Place, as some part of *Africa* is said to be, though it abounds in Monsters. And yet those prodigious Things have met with Success: for a Fool is naturally fond of a Monster, because he is incapable of knowing a Man.

While

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While you drink Steel for your Spleen at *Tunbridge*, I partake of the Benefit of the Course; for the Gayety of your Letters relieves me considerably: Then what must your Conversation do? Come up and make the Experiment; and impart that Vigour to me which *Tunbridge* has restor'd to you.

I am your most humble Servant,

JOHN DENNIS.

Mr.—— to Mr. Dennis.

N *Amur* taken, and a Letter from Mr. *Dennis*, were two of the most agreeable Surprizes I ever met with. And nothing but the Reflection, how dear the Conquest will cost us, I mean, the innumerable ill Poems it will produce, could allay the Pleasure. *A—* has watch'd for a Victory a long time, and will not miss this Opportunity to mortifie the Day of Thanksgiving, and scribble away the Publick Joy. The Devil take *Will's* Coffee-house: I could be the easiest Man in the World under my Calamity, if it were not for some of the Company there; who are now the greatest Enemies I have in the World,
worfe

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worse than the Company from which I am just now stol'n to write this Letter. Among the rest is a Country Gentleman who dictates Politicks abundantly, for with us, as well as at old *Rome*, we take Dictators from the Plow; but ours are such as ought never to remove their Hands from it.

I am yours, &c.

Mr. --- to Mr. Dennis.

WHile you are happy in the Politicks of the Grave Club, and the Two Covent-garden Clubs. Puns of the Rabble, you have no regard to the forlorn State of your poor Friend. Before I left *London*, I fained an hundred agreeable melancholy Pleasures, with which I might fool away a Retirement; but now I detest being alone, and question whether Mankind or Solitude be the fitter Subject for a Satyr. Of this, I am sure, that God Almighty, rather than be alone, created the —; and Man rather than be alone, chose a Wife. Whatever advantage I have lost by my Country Life, I believe, I have gain'd the Gift of Prophecie in the Wilderness, for I foretold the Poem with which *A--* has visited us.

I am yours, &c.
Mr.

Hh

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Mr. — to Mr. Dennis.

TO your Business hereafter, but first, let's have a Dance, as Mr. Bays says. When I came home from the West, where I had passed a Fortnight, I found your three Letters full of Wit and Humor. I was charm'd with the Scandal you writ in the first, and enclosed in the last, *viz.* A's Poem. I found the Preamble before the Poem to be like a Suterkin before a Dutch Child. I read it over in great hast, in hopes to be pleased at last with the End of it, but this is the first time I ever dislik'd his Conclusion. For he threatens strange things. I hope, 'tis only *in terrorem*, if not, I hope God in his Goodness will send us a Peace, and prevent his Songs of Triumph. Certainly, since the Devil was Dumb there never was such a Poet.

F O I N I S.

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